



Irish teachers urged to drop 'mummy and daddy'

DUBLIN — The Roman Catholic Church in Ireland has urged teachers to drop "mummy and daddy" from their classrooms. The church's Catechism states that children should be taught to respect their parents, but the church's stance has been criticized for being too strict.

Residents demonstrate against 'neighbour from hell'

SAINTE HELENA — Residents of the remote island of Saint Helena have demonstrated against a new neighbor. The islanders are concerned about the impact of a new development on their way of life.

Chicago girl who never went to school starts class

CHICAGO — A young girl who had never attended school has started her first day of class. The girl, who was 10 years old, had been homeschooled by her parents.

Monkeys' pantomime words take bus in Vietnam

HANOI — A group of monkeys has been used in a pantomime performance in Vietnam. The performance was a success, and the monkeys were praised for their acting.

Lebanese army soldier injured by Israeli gunfire

SIDON (AFP) — A Lebanese army soldier was wounded Sunday by gunfire originating from an Israeli army position inside the self-declared "security zone" in south Lebanon, police said. Corporal Mohammad Hussein was hit in the head by a bullet at a Lebanese army forward position at Kfar Rouman and taken to Nabatiyeh hospital, but his injuries are not life-threatening, police said. The army position is opposite an Israeli position on the hill of Tahra, in the central section of the self-declared zone. Lebanese and Israeli troops rarely clash in south Lebanon, but tension between the sides has been high since six Lebanese soldiers were killed and five wounded in an Israeli air raid, Sept. 12. Earlier Sunday, an officer in the Israeli-allied South Lebanon Army (SLA) was killed in a bomb attack in the Jezzine region of south Lebanon. The attack was claimed by Hizbollah.

Haddadin attends Peres Peace Centre launch

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Water and Irrigation Munther Haddadin takes part Sunday in the inauguration ceremony of the Peres Peace Centre in Tel Aviv. The centre aims at carrying out studies on peace. On his two-day visit, Dr. Haddadin will also discuss with Israeli Minister of Infrastructure Ariel Sharon the development of the Jordan Rift Valley.

Israel investigates report that Palestinian beaten by police

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Israeli police have opened an investigation into reports that five Israeli border police beat up a Palestinian after they were ordered to release him, police said Sunday. The Palestinian, Ahmad Shakarneh, 26, from the West Bank town of Bethlehem, on Friday accused the police of beating him after he was arrested last Sunday for entering Israel without permission. Mr. Shakarneh told Agence France Presse he lost consciousness and was hospitalized when police who had been ordered to release him took him instead to an unknown area where they punched and kicked him.

Egyptian MPs launch campaign to boycott U.S. goods

CAIRO (AFP) — Nine Egyptian members of parliament launched a campaign Saturday to boycott U.S. and Israeli goods to protest what they called Washington's bias towards the Jewish state. "Arab people cannot stand by doing nothing in the face of the Zionist enemy's practices," the MPs said in a statement, calling on businessmen and Egyptian citizens to shun U.S. and Israeli goods. The U.S. is Egypt's main trading partner. Egypt is also the second biggest recipient of U.S. aid after Israel, receiving \$2.1 billion a year.

Egyptian PM backtracks on legal action against newspaper

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian Prime Minister Kamal Jazuri has backtracked on a decision to launch a civil action against journalists being prosecuted for allegedly defaming the interior minister. In a front-page statement published Sunday by the state press, the government's legal advisor Jammal Labban said he had never been instructed by Mr. Jazuri to file a suit against six journalists from the biweekly Al Shaab newspaper. "There has been no lawsuit from the prime minister contrary to what has been published by some newspapers," the statement said. At the start Wednesday of the libel trial, a lawyer for the government told a Cairo court that Mr. Jazuri and Interior Minister Hassan Alfi were demanding \$150 damages for harming the reputation of the country's police force. The charges were pressed after Mr. Alfi filed a defamation complaint in August against Al Shaab journalists over articles accusing him of abuse of power and misappropriation of public funds. The next hearing is set for Nov. 10 and if convicted the journalists could be sentenced to up to three years in prison.

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Tarawneh expects peace process back on track soon as result of U.S. efforts

Jordan will attend MENA conference next month

By P.V. Vivekanand
Special to the Jordan Times

BAHRAIN — Jordan expects the Middle East peace process to be back on track soon with what it sees as a renewed U.S. engagement in Arab-Israeli peace talks, according to Foreign Minister Fayez Tarawneh.

Dr. Tarawneh also affirmed that Jordanian-Israeli relations were back to normal after a recent strain caused by an attempt by Israeli agents to assassinate a leader of the Palestinian Hamas group in Amman.

The minister, who visited Bahrain over the weekend with a message to the emir, Sheikh Issa Bin Salman Al Khalifa, from His Majesty King Hussein, said that Jordan would attend next month's Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic conference to be held in Doha.

Dr. Tarawneh, who returned home on Sunday after preparing for a meeting next month of the Bahraini-Jordanian joint committee at prime ministerial level in Amman, expressed confidence that the democratic process under way in Jordan was moving in the right direction despite a boycott of Nov. 4 parliamentary elections by the mainstream Islamist political movement in the Kingdom.

The minister, who served as ambassador to the U.S. prior to entering the Cabinet in March this year, said Jordan saw a "window" for a resumption of the Israeli-

Palestinian peace negotiations following the recent visit to the region by U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright.

"Madam Albright now knows the realities on the ground after her visit, and we believe that Washington is reengaging itself in the peace process after a break of eight months" — since President Bill Clinton started his second term in office — said Dr. Tarawneh.

The minister said the Jordanian approach was now based on consolidating the renewed American involvement in the peace process — of which Washington is the main sponsor.

Amman will also press other international parties, including Russia — the nominal co-sponsor of the peace process — to revive their focus on the effort for a comprehensive peace in the Middle East, said Dr. Tarawneh, noting that Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov was scheduled to visit Jordan on Oct. 27.

"We are trying to combine all efforts so as to advance the peace process, particularly the Israeli-Palestinian track," said Dr. Tarawneh, adding that Jordan was heartened by the recent Israeli-Palestinian contacts under U.S. auspices in Washington.

Jordan, which signed a peace treaty with Israel in October 1994, is also seeking to consolidate an Arab front in the peace process

Jordan, Bahrain to sign bilateral accords

JORDAN AND Bahrain will sign several agreements during a meeting in Amman next month of the joint Jordanian-Bahraini Higher Committee chaired by the prime ministers of the two countries, Foreign Minister Fayez Tarawneh said yesterday.

Dr. Tarawneh, summing up the talks he held in Bahrain during a weekend visit, said the two countries shared identical views on Arab economic integration and this strengthens their efforts to develop economic cooperation.

He called for the opening of all inter-Arab borders to facilitate the flow of people, goods and services as a key confidence-building measure for Arab businessmen.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs lamented that inter-Arab economic ties were weak because of lack of awareness of each other's potential, but added that the overriding factor in such a relationship was the influence of political positions.

"Arabs have not yet got to know each other very well although they call each other one family," said the Minister in an interview. "They do not still know the economic systems of each other very well."

However, "politics dominate the economic sphere," said Dr. Tarawneh, calling for separation between politics and economic cooperation. "Even if we have political differences, we should separate the dealings of the private

sector and keep the doors open to businessmen, capital movement and investments," said the minister.

"I found the same ideas and thinking in Bahrain through meetings with the country's government and hope that these ideas are spread among other Arab countries," he said.

The agreements expected to be signed in Amman next month cover the transport and energy sectors as well as elimination of double taxation and protection of investments, he said. Several agreements on cultural cooperation will also be signed.

Another area where Jordan would offer its expertise to Bahrain is through offering training to Bahrainis at Amman's Institute of Diplomacy — "One of the most sophisticated institutions in the Arab World" — he added.

Noting that Jordan has always been an advocate of an Arab common market, Dr. Tarawneh welcomed the recent announcement by the eight-member Damascus Declaration of the intention to set up such an entity.

However, said Dr. Tarawneh, achieving that goal was not a short-term task.

"It might take 10 or 15 years before we can really have an Arab common market with all [that] it entails," he said, recalling that it took decades before European countries could launch the European Community leading to the European Union.



Banners promoting candidates' slogans hang on top of each other at the Wihdat refugee camp Sunday. Some banners promise to 'protect' the Wihdat Sports Club while others promise a fight against poverty and unemployment. Wihdat belongs to Amman's 2nd electoral district (Photo by Yousef 'Allan')

Japan establishes \$60m fund to support Jordan's development

By Ghalia Alul
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A \$60 million Jordanian-Japanese fund was established on Sunday in support of the Kingdom's social and economic development.

The special fund, aimed at supporting Jordan's Social Productivity Programme, is drawn into two types of grants: \$42 million for the Kingdom's balance of payments in the form of financing of goods, machinery and equipment, and \$18 million for the purchase of agricultural equipment and farm machinery.

Japanese Ambassador to Jordan, Takayuki Kimura said on Sunday.

"The establishment of this special fund will enable both governments to respond more flexibly to the specific needs of Jordan (in order to utilize) the Japanese grants in the most effective way," said Mr.

Kimura.

Mr. Kimura told the Jordan Times that Jordan and Japan will discuss the nature of projects to benefit from this fund, but stressed the need to allocate a substantial share to the Social Productivity Programme.

"We understand the Social Productivity Programme was initiated by HRH Crown Prince Hassan with the aim to help the socially disadvantaged and those in special difficulty. We therefore wish to support the programme as much as possible in consultation with the government of Jordan," Mr. Kimura said after signing the agreement with Minister of Planning Rima Khalaf.

Earlier this month, Japan granted Jordan approximately \$87 million for various infrastructure projects in what Mr. Kimura described as "appreciation of the Kingdom's efforts in pushing the peace process

forward."

Other projects currently under implementation include a \$7.2 million renovation of Sheikh Hussein Bridge, \$23 million in support of Jordan's balance of payments and a \$3.7 and \$2.2 million to increase food production in the Kingdom.

The ambassador said that Jordan and Japan are close to an agreement for the rescheduling of \$72 million of Jordanian debts to Tokyo.

Mr. Kimura added that Japan will, in the near future, extend a loan of \$85 million in support of Jordanian tourism projects.

In its 1996 fiscal year, Japan granted Jordan approximately \$68 million in loans and about \$50 million in grants.

Since 1974 Japan has extended over \$2.1 billion in soft loans to the Kingdom.

Ross meets Arafat, Netanyahu on start of fourth mission to region

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — U.S. peace envoy Dennis Ross began another round of talks with Israeli and Palestinian leaders Sunday in a new bid to revive their stalled peace process, but he quickly ran into the same intransigent positions which have blocked progress for months.

Mr. Ross began his fourth mission to the region in barely two months by meeting Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Israel.

He then travelled to the West Bank town of Ramallah where he was meeting with Palestinian President Yasser Arafat Sunday night.

Mr. Ross will stay through Wednesday to pursue talks with both sides. Senior Israeli and Palestinian officials are due to follow up with direct talks in Washington next week.

Israeli officials said the meetings with Mr. Ross would tackle the thorny issue of defining the nature of a "time-out" demanded by Washington and the Palestinians in Jewish settlement construction in occupied territories.

But they reiterated their long-held position that Israel remained deeply dissatisfied with the Palestinian National Authority's (PNA) efforts to fight Islamists and that progress on other issues could not be expected until this changed.

until the PNA has proven its willingness to crack down on terrorism.

"We will discuss all the subjects but we will not transfer any more territory until we know very clearly over a period of time that there is a systematic policy of war against terrorism by the Palestinian [National] Authority," he said.

Mr. Netanyahu has also repeatedly rebuffed the calls for a freeze in all Jewish settlement buildings in occupied territories where the Palestinians hope, through their negotiations with Israel, to obtain their own state.

David Bar-Ilan, a senior advisor to Mr. Netanyahu, said the Palestinian leader's decision late last month to close Hamas social offices after the group carried out a spate of suicide bombings in Jerusalem was insufficient.

"What we are talking about is dismantling armed militias like Hamas, Islamic Jihad and others, handing over 36 terrorists wanted for murdering Israelis and the halt to incitement and rallies and sermonising which calls for violence and terrorism against Israelis," he told Agence France Presse (AFP).

During his earlier trips, Mr. Ross succeeded in mediating a resumption of negotiations on long-overdue Israeli commitments to extend Palestinian autonomy, notably by authorising the opening of an airport and sea port in the Gaza Strip and the creation of free passages between the PNA-ruled areas.

Mr. Netanyahu said at the start of his meeting with envoy Ross that progress on these issues could come "very quickly" if the PNA

agrees to Israeli demands for broad security control over the facilities, something President Arafat has been unwilling to grant.

During his previous mission, the U.S. envoy succeeded in bringing Messrs Netanyahu and Arafat together for their first meeting in more than eight months.

But Mr. Bar-Ilan said that the U.S. initiative had so far produced "nothing that we can be satisfied with" due to the PNA's failure to crack down on armed groups.

"Without movement on this front, it will be hard to continue with any substantive steps," he said.

Mr. Arafat's spokesman Marwan Kanafani complained that the recently resumed talks with Israel had so far "been going around in circles" rather than addressing the core Palestinian demands on Jewish settlements and on troop withdrawals.

"It appears the Israelis have no intention of dealing seriously with the issues of the negotiations," he told AFP.

"During Ross's new visit we must get the true picture — whether [Israel's] goal is just to buy time or to work seriously to find solutions," he said.

Envoy Ross, Mr. Christopher and a host of prominent international figures were due to attend the inauguration in Tel Aviv on Monday of a peace centre launched by Shimon Peres, the former Israeli prime minister and principle architect of peace agreements with the Palestinians.

Qatar calls for peace process progress ahead of conference

DOHA (AFP) — Qatar called Sunday for progress in the Arab-Israeli peace process in order to make a success of next month's controversial Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic conference which Israel is expected to attend.

"We expect and hope for progress in the peace process, which will contribute more to the success of the conference" in the Qatari capital Doha, Qatar's foreign minister, Sheikh Hamad Ben Jasssem Ben Jaber Al Thani, said.

"We must not allow those who seek to injure the peace, especially Israel, to succeed," the minister said on the sidelines of a colloquium on economic development in the Middle East organised by Harvard University.

"All the invitations have been sent, and we hope everyone will participate," he said, adding that "participation in the conference is up to each country and its assessment of the situation."

"We think that participating in this forum will not harm the peace process but may contribute to it, and that the world will see that Arab countries want peace," he continued.

Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy and U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright are expected to attend the MENA conference.

Shaer resigns NCP in protest of 'stealth candidates'

Secret list of 15 NCP candidates 'very reliable,' says Shaer

By Francesca Ciriaci
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The National Constitutional Party (NCP) has lost yet another prominent member due to its decision to field secret candidates in addition to those included in the party's ticket.

Jamal Shaer, a former Ba'athist who has gradually shifted to more centrist stands during his 30-years in politics, quit the NCP in protest against what he described as the "devious" phenomenon of "stealth candidates."

Dr. Shaer brought to around one hundred the NCP members who left the powerful pro-government group in the past few weeks, primarily because of what they deemed as lack of democracy in the party's decision-making process.

According to Dr. Shaer, candidates who do not publicise their political affiliations during their campaign have better

chances of being elected, due to the people's disenchantment with political parties.

Tribal support, he noted, is conditional on the candidate's promise that, once elected, they will be dedicated to their tribe's interests and needs.

"In more than one case, candidates are faced by their own tribesmen with the question whether, once elected, they will represent the tribe's interests or those of a political party," Dr. Shaer told the Jordan Times in a telephone interview Sunday.

For example, Dr. Shaer cited the case of his own electoral constituency, Balqa, in which the NCP has fielded former Minister Hashem Dabbas as a strong "unofficial" candidate.

But, while increasing would-be deputies' chances of being elected, the practice of fielding secret candidates deceives voters, who run the risk of electing a deputy who will

reveal his/her political affiliations only after the elections are over.

A list of 15 possible Stealth candidates, so-called after the U.S. fighter plane equipped to escape radar detection, was revealed earlier last week by Al Urdun Al Jadid, a research centre specialised in analysing and monitoring Jordan's democratisation process.

The list, which Dr. Shaer described as "very reliable" included: Hashem Dabbas (Balqa), Mansour Ben Tarif (Karak), Ahmad, Hani and Falah Qudab (Ajloun), Samir Qawar (Balqa), Mohammad Thweib (Amman's 2nd District), Mohammad Huneiti, Barjes Hadid and Hamad Abu Zeid (Amman's 4th District), Mifteh Ruheimi (Jerash), Aysa Khawaja Razem (Amman's 1st District), Nu'man Gheiri (Zarqa), Osama Malsawi (Ramtha and Bani Kinaneh),

Majali urges citizens to vote during visits to Mafraq, Zarqa governorates

MAFRAQ-ZARQA (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Sunday visited the Mafraq and Zarqa governorates and urged residents there to vote in the upcoming parliamentary elections.

He told a meeting in Mafraq that the government is planning to draw up a modern election law that can meet all the requirements of the various social and political factions in Jordan and entails dividing the Kingdom into 80 constituencies, with one seat in the Lower House of Parliament for each district.

Dr. Majali said the present government's main

tasks include holding free and fair elections, pursuing the economic restructuring programme, giving impetus to the peace process, and addressing domestic affairs, particularly the weaknesses in public administration.

During the meeting, which was attended by Mafraq Governor Ahmad Lawzi and members of the governorate's executive council, Dr. Majali said the government is seeking to convey its ideas to all employees on "freedom and participation," which is not merely a slogan but rather a practical policy.

He said the government will soon delegate some

areas of authority to governors, including preparing their regions' fiscal budgets in cooperation with the Ministry of Finance.

Each governorate will have to prepare plans for investments and for creating vocational training centres, he added.

Replying to some demands presented by the local community, the prime minister said the Jordan Armed Forces are preparing to build a hospital in Mafraq, adding that he will ask the Ministry of Public Works and Housing to allocate funds for the construction of roads.

Mr. Lawzi outlined the overall situation in the governorate, which is inhabited by 200,000 citizens, and asked that the government build a vocational centre and a hospital and enlarge the Amman-Rweished-Iraq highway to curtail road accidents.

On preparations for the elections, he said there are 45,552 eligible voters in the Mafraq Governorate, who will be voting at 38 centres.

During his subsequent visit to Zarqa, Dr. Majali said the government was embarking on decentralisation plans that would ease the burden on the central government.

As for the elections, he said they will be fair and free, without any governmental interference, adding that the government hopes that the elections will contribute to presenting an excellent image of the Kingdom to the world.

The government is planning to submit the Press and Publications Law to the next Parliament, he said.

At the outset of the meeting, Zarqa Governor Eid Qatameh presented a report on the general situation in the governorate and preparations for the elections.



REGENT VISITS MINISTRY OF INTERIOR: His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad, the Regent, Sunday makes an inspection tour of the Ministry of Interior, during which he is briefed on the preparations for the general elections. Minister of Interior Nahir Rashid, the ministry's Secretary General Hashem Sabbagh, and other ministry officials received Prince Mohammad (Petra photo)

First Business Week opens today in Detroit

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan's First Business Week, a symposium aimed at marketing the country abroad and encouraging investment in local projects, will open in the U.S. city of Detroit today under the patronage of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan.

The meeting, which was organised by the Jordan Exports Development and Commercial Centres Corporation (JEDCO), in cooperation with the Jordanian embassy in Washington and with support from the governor of the state of Michigan, aims at developing American-Jordanian relations and orienting the American public on investment opportunities in the Kingdom, according to Bashir Khasawneh, JEDCO acting director.

He told a press conference Sunday that the meeting, to be opened by Deputy Prime Minister Jawad Anani, who will stand in for the Crown Prince, will be attended by representatives of 60 Jordanian industrial firms, the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce, the Amman Chamber of Industry, the Jordanian Industrial Estates Corporation, and the

Investment Promotion Corporation.

Mr. Khasawneh said the meeting will be one of a series of seminars to be addressed by Minister of Industry, Trade and Supply Hani Mulki on Jordanian-American economic relations.

The meetings will highlight Jordan's pharmaceutical industries and the country's cultural and historical background and archaeological sites.

Mr. Khasawneh said the week's activities will include workshops boosting trade between the state of Michigan and Jordan, as well as other parts of the

Middle East, adding that 40 Jordanian businesspeople representing various firms will attend the meetings, in addition to the American companies that are partially financing the event.

According to Mr. Khasawneh, Jordan's exports to the U.S. in 1994 amounted to JD8.029 million, rising to JD14.677 million in 1995, and JD13.774 million in 1996.

Jordan imported JD232.545 million worth of American products in 1994, JD240.512 million in 1995, and JD294.904 million in 1996, he explained.

11 people who were trapped at a ranch in the Jaffa area. An interruption in the electricity supply to some villages in the Irbid region occurred after strong winds knocked down some power lines, Petra said.

The strong winds and rain caused cracks in the walls of a number of old homes in many parts of the Kingdom.

Opposition group denounces pro-boycott activist's arrest by mayor of Irbid

By Francesca Ciriaci
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Higher Committee for the Coordination Among the Opposition Parties (HCCOAP) yesterday denounced the arrest of a pro-boycott activist in Irbid.

A press statement signed by the current chairman of the ten-party committee, Mohammad Zou'bi, said the mayor of the northern industrial town ordered the arrest of Shehadeh Abu Sharif for "hindering the election process."

Mr. Abu Sharif reportedly went to the Irbid Municipality building to ask for authorisation to hold a public meeting. When he refused to sign a written guarantee that the meeting would not represent "an incitement to boycott the elections," the mayor

ordered his arrest.

Mr. Zou'bi stated that "the opposition parties condemn such actions and demand that the government stop interfering with the citizens' constitutional freedom to express their stands and opinions."

Mr. Abu Sharif belongs to a group that calls itself "The Movement in Support of Election Boycott," which Friday issued an appeal to all Jordanians to boycott the Nov. 4 polls.

In its statement, the group criticised the one-person, one-vote system as "serving only the interests of the government and not those of the people" and condemned the Oslo and Wadi Araba accords.

Mr. Zou'bi's statement in support of Mr. Abu Sharif represents the first link between the group and the HCCOAP.

The committee's statement accused the government of "taking further action [against those in favour of the boycott], like transferring all public employees suspected of spreading the boycott call to remote areas, and especially those belonging to pro-boycott parties."

Mr. Zou'bi also stated that the government is "threatening to impose financial sanctions on those calling for the boycott."

Ten opposition parties, including the Islamic Action Front, the pan-Arabist Al Mustaqbal, and the leftist Hashd, answered the Muslim Brotherhood's July call for an election boycott.

The Union of the Professional Associations and two groups of independent personalities, one led by

former prime ministers Taher Masri and Ahmad Obeidat and the second led by outspoken opposition leader Leith Shbeilat, also joined the pro-boycott front.

In a related development, the Ministry of Interior Saturday issued further regulations concerning the upcoming elections of the Kingdom's 13th Parliament.

The regulations state that no weapons, even licensed ones, can be carried by candidates or voters into the balloting stations and veiled women shall uncover their faces in order to be identified by female government officials before casting their votes. Such measures, the ministry maintained, are aimed at preventing fraud.

Weekend storm death toll rises to three

By Rana Hussein
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The death toll attributed to this weekend's sand and rain storm has risen to three, after the Civil Defence Department (CDD) Sunday reported two more deaths.

In Balqa, a 42-year-old man was killed Sunday morning after a two-tonne rock that was loosened by the heavy rain fell on him in the town of Um Jozah, CDD officials said.

Captain Farid Sharee' of the CDD said the rain softened the mud surrounding the rock, and the rock rolled down the hill where Mahmoud Abu Rumman was working and struck him.

Slippery roads caused the death Saturday of a 35-year-old woman, who was riding in a pick-up truck that skidded off the main road in Zarqa and rolled over, police reported.

The Meteorological Department is forecasting more thunderstorms, accompanied by heavy showers, in some areas of the Kingdom. It is also forecasting a further drop in temperature.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported yesterday that police helicopters evacuated

11 people who were trapped at a ranch in the Jaffa area. An interruption in the electricity supply to some villages in the Irbid region occurred after strong winds knocked down some power lines, Petra said.

The strong winds and rain caused cracks in the walls of a number of old homes in many parts of the Kingdom.

Jordan Times Fax
696-183

WHAT'S GOING ON

EUROPEAN FILM FESTIVAL
* Austrian film "Malambo" and Swedish film "Elvira Madigan" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 4:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. respectively

CONCERT
* Musical performance by Freddy For Music at the Royal Cultural Centre at 6:00 p.m.

MOTOR SHOW
* "Motor Show 98" at the Amman International Motor Show (Tel. 714211) until Oct. 20.

LECTURES
* "Trifles Make the Sum of Life" by Dr. Nicholas Linfield at the British Council, Jabal Amman at 5:00 p.m.

* "Al Yasileh: A Classical Site in Northern Jordan" by Dr. Zaydoun Al-Muhaisen at the Friends of Archaeology Centre at 6:00 p.m. (Tel. 696682).

EXHIBITIONS
* Ceramics exhibition by Ra'd Dlamini at Orfali Art Gallery, Umun Utheina, until Oct. 30.
* "Oriental Gem Trees" by

Latifi Hamdan at the Royal Cultural Centre, until Oct. 23.

* Paintings by Iraqi artist Walid Nasrallah at Hamourabi Art Gallery, Gardens Street, until Oct. 28.

* Paintings by Abdul Qader Bakheet at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman, until Oct. 30.

* Works by Iraqi artist Ali Al-Ebadi at Baladna Art Gallery, Gardens Street, until Oct. 23 (Tel. 5537598).

Court hears final expert witness in father's murder trial

By Rana Hussein
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Criminal Court Sunday heard the last witness expert in the case of Mazen Masri, the 34-year-old father accused of poisoning his two children in Shmeisani in September 1996.

Mr. Masri reportedly confessed to authorities on Sept. 25 that he killed his children by administering two cyanide pills to Hanin, nine, and Hani,

age and used the millimetre per blood litre instead on the decimetre measurement unit, and that the actual percentage of cyanide was 60 to 65 milligrammes per litre.

Mr. Masri confessed to killing his two children "out of jealousy because they were more attached to their mother than him."

However, in January Mr. Masri retracted his previous confession in court, claiming that he made his statements under psychological pressure exerted on him by the authorities.

At the end of the 30-minute court session, Defence Attorney Ahmad Najdawi asked the court to summon a previous defence witness, Samir Qamaz, to clarify the inaccuracy in the new reports, which were brought up by the testimony of the court witnesses.

CONDOLENCES
The Advisory Committee and all members of the Friends of Archaeology/Jordan extend heartfelt condolences to their friend and colleague
Mrs. Paula Williams Brown
on the tragic loss of her husband,
Mr. Dennis L. Brown,
in the United States. He gave a lifetime of service and friendship to the people of Jordan, Syria and Palestine.
May he rest in peace.

JORDAN TELEVISION

PROGRAMME TWO
14:10...A Show With the Mouse
14:30...Cowboys of the Moo Mesa
15:00...Gillette Sports Special
15:30...Riding High
16:00...Animal Show
16:30...Ocean Girl
17:15...French Programmes
19:00...News in French
19:15...French programme
19:30...News Headline
19:35...Neighbours
20:00...Comedy — Murphy Brown
20:30...Babylon 5
21:10...Highlander
22:00...News in English
22:30...Emergency Room
23:15...Homicide
23:59...End of T.X.

PRAYER TIMES

04:21...Fajr
05:38...Sunrise Doha
11:20...Dhuhr
14:32...Asr
17:03...Maghreb
18:20...Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweekh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Tel. 637440.
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757.
Tierra Santa Church Tel. 622366
Anglican Church Tel. 652826.
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.
Armenian International Church Tel. 5516245.
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328.
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 688404.
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932.
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691.
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295.
English-speaking Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

AMMAN:
Dr. Mubdies Halseh 5519220
Dr. Rabi Sukkar 856457
Dr. Yusef Al Faqih 790104
Dr. Fadi Al Khatib 865456
Firas pharmacy 661912
Fardous pharmacy 778336
Al Asens pharmacy 637055
Nairoukh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660
Najib pharmacy 847632

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology
Relative cold weather conditions will prevail with skies cloudy to partly cloudy. There will be scattered showers accompanied by thunderstorms and winds westerly moderate to active. In Aqaba,

IRBID:

Dr. Ahmad Qasbi 281484
Al Quds pharmacy (—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Fahd Jabir 984549
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Dept. 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water & Sewage Complaints 897467
Central Amman Municipality Complaints 787111
Repairs 623101
Abdali Tel. Repairs 661101
Radio Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
J. Electricity Authority 815615

HOSPITALS

Electric Power Co. 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200
AMMAN:
Luzulu 630195
Husseini Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity 644281/6
Akileh Maternity 642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 607071
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Muasher Hospital 667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3
Al-Basir 775111/26
Army, Marka 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199
ZARQA:
Govt. Hospital 69983323
Zarqa National Hospital 69900560
Ibn Sina Hospital 69986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital 69990990
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital 6275555

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
07:05...Damascus (RJ)
07:30...Sanaa (RJ)
08:30...Jeddah (RJ)
08:45...New Delhi (RJ)
09:20...Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
09:25...Beirut (RJ)
14:15...Kuwait (RJ)
16:15...Cairo (RJ)
16:30...London (RJ)
16:40 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
18:00...Bangkok (RJ)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
04:45...Beirut (RJ)
08:40...Kuwait (RJ)
11:00...Milan (RJ)

Other Flights

09:30...Al 'Arish (PF)
09:45...Khartoum (SD)
13:10...Muscat, Bahrain (GF)
14:05...Vienna (OS)
15:50...Doha (QR)
19:50...Tel Aviv (LY)
20:10...Paris, Damascus (AF)
21:15...Cairo (MS)
22:30...Athens (OA)
00:20...Amsterdam, Damascus (KL)

Other Flights

08:00...Beirut (ME)
08:10...London (BA)
10:30...Al 'Arish (PF)
11:00...Khartoum (SD)
14:00...Bahrain (GF)
14:50...Vienna (OS)
16:50...Doha (QR)
20:10...Tel Aviv (LY)
22:15...Cairo (MS)
22:55...Damascus, Paris (AF)
01:30...Amsterdam (KL)
03:00...Athens (OA)

Other Flights

05:30...Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)
06:50...Tel Aviv (RW)
07:55...Amman (QAIA) (RW)
08:50...Amman (QAIA) (RW)
10:20...Aqaba (RW)
11:40...Amman (QAIA) (RW)
20:30...Amman (QAIA) (RW)
21:50...Aqaba (RW)



ARAB BANK GROUP

Balance Sheet as of 30 June 1997 and 1996

Assets	1997 USD ('000)	1996 USD ('000)
Cash and due from banks	5,882,535	5,640,200
Government and trading securities	953,624	1,326,583
Loans and advances, net	7,087,599	6,309,604
Long-term investments, net	1,523,818	1,118,545
Fixed assets, net	108,950	96,129
Other assets	359,591	350,479
Total Assets	15,916,117	14,841,540

Customers' liability on guarantees, letters of credit and other contingencies	5,203,701	5,919,950
Total	21,119,818	20,761,490

Net profit for the period ended 30 June 1997 and 30 June 1996 was included in "Other Liabilities"

Main branches in the Arab countries

Branch	Country (No. of branches)	P.O.Box	Telephone	Facsimile
Shmeisani, Amman	Jordan (85)	950546	607231	670564
King Faisal St. Amman		68	638161	637082
Ramallah	West Bank (9)	1487	9954822	9954824
Gaza	Gaza Strip (3)	91	866288	820704
Manama O.B.U.	Bahrain (1)	813	212255	224475
Manama	Bahrain (3)	395	229988	210443
Cairo	Egypt (6)	2006	5746218	5746165
Beirut	Lebanon (10)	11-1015	980430	980803
Doha	Qatar (2)	172	437979	410774
Abu Dhabi	U.A.E. (8)	875	274111	272433
Dubai		11364	228845	285974
Sana'a	Yemen (7)	475	276584	276583

Main branches in Europe, Asia and U.S.A.

Branch	Country (No. of branches)	P.O.Box	Telephone	Facsimile
Nicosia	Cyprus (4)	5650	457111	367741
Paris	France (2)	319	45616000	42890978
Athens	Greece (1)	30357	3255401	3255519
Rome	Italy (1)	745	69940479	6795601
Madrid	Spain (3)		3084290	3086482
London	U.K. (3)	138	3158500	6007620
Singapore	Singapore (1)		5330055	5322150
Seoul	S. Korea (1)	1331	3179000	7570124
New York	U.S.A. (1)		7159700	5934632

Sister, Subsidiary and Associated Companies

Arab Bank	Percentage of Ownership
Arab Bank (Switzerland) Ltd. - Zurich, Geneva	100%
Arab Bank Australia Ltd. - Sydney	100%
Arab Bank (Austria) AG - Vienna	100%
Arab Bank AG - Frankfurt / Germany	100%
Finance, Accountancy, Mohassaba S.A. - Geneva	100%
Islamic International Arab Bank-Amman	100%
Arab Tunisian Bank - Tunis	64%
Arab Palestinian Investment Bank - Ramallah	55%
Arab Bank Maroc - Morocco	50%
Oman Arab Bank - Oman	49%
Arab National Bank - Saudi Arabia	40%
Arabia Insurance Co., Lebanon	37%
Commercial Building Co., Lebanon	30%

Liabilities and Shareholders' Equity	1997 USD ('000)	1996 USD ('000)
Customer deposits	10,571,772	9,716,922
Bank deposits	3,004,504	3,014,576
Other liabilities	953,143	868,951
Total Liabilities	14,529,419	13,600,449
Capital	84,897	84,897
Statutory reserve	78,766	78,181
Voluntary reserve	218,836	179,230
General reserve	738,626	641,782
Reserves with associated companies	310,944	273,823
Retained earnings	483	2,031
Total	1,432,552	1,259,944

Total Shareholders' Equity	1,386,698	1,241,091
Total Liabilities and Shareholders' Equity	15,916,117	14,841,540
Guarantees, letters of credit and other contingencies	5,203,701	5,919,950
Total	21,119,818	20,761,490

JOD 1 = USD 1.41 on 30/06/1997
JOD 1 = USD 1.41 on 30/06/1996

Income Statement for the period ended 30 June 1997 and 1996	1997 USD ('000)	1996 USD ('000)
Net interest and commission	230,997	218,154
Plus: Foreign exchange trading	14,841	12,201
Other income	16,803	13,426
	262,641	243,781
Less: General and administrative expenses	127,470	120,875
Net income before tax	135,171	122,906
Income tax	26,606	27,340
Net income	108,565	95,566

Sister, Subsidiary and associated companies

	Country	P.O.Box	Telephone	Facsimile
Arab Bank (Switzerland) Ltd.	Zurich	5281	2657111	2657330
	Geneva	1096	7151211	7322460
Arab Bank Australia Ltd.	Sydney	N-645	93778900	92215428
Arab Bank (Austria) AG	Vienna	100	5134240	51342409
Arab Bank AG	Frankfurt	100127	242590	235471
Finance, Accountancy, Mohassaba S.A.	Geneva	1506	9083000	7387229
Arab Tunisian Bank	Tunis	520	349736	349278
Oman Arab Bank S.A.O.	Ruwi	2010	706265	797736
Arab Bank Maroc	Casablanca	13810	223152	200233
Arab National Bank	Riyadh	56921	4029000	4027747
Arabia Insurance Co.	Beirut	11-2172	363610	365139
Arab Palestinian Investment Bank	Ramallah	1268	9987126	9987125

Representative offices	Beijing (Peking)	China	Tel. 65182858	Fax 65182358
	Shanghai	China	Tel. 65077737	Fax 65072776
	Santiago	Chile	Tel. 2342608	Fax 2344745

ARAB BANK, GENERAL MANAGEMENT, SHMEISANI, AMMAN, P.O.BOX 950544-5.
TELEPHONE : 607115, 607231, TELEX : 23091 ARABNK JO, FAX : (962) (6) 606793

Visit our website on the Internet at <http://www.arabbank.com>

Montenegrins vote for tarnished candidates

BELGRADE (R) — Montenegrins voted Sunday at the end of a presidential election campaign in which the Yugoslav Republic's two top political leaders tarnished each other with accusations of massive corruption.

The early turnout was heavy after an indecisive first round two weeks ago when outgoing President Momir Bulatovic edged reformist Prime Minister Milo Djukanovic by just 2,500 votes.

Mr. Bulatovic's strong showing surprised Mr. Djukanovic, who had expected to cruise to victory after sidelining his former ally and taking control of the state apparatus during a year of political infighting.

Opinions polls forecast the second round result would be close as Mr. Bulatovic complained that electoral registers had been doctored in Mr. Djukanovic's favour between the two rounds.

The final stages of the race teetered on the brink of farce when police loyal to Mr. Djukanovic arrested a group of men from Belgrade who claimed they had been sent to foment trouble if Mr. Bulatovic lost.

Their leader, who escaped, was named as a Yugoslav army major called Rambo.

Diplomats said the credibility of both men had been badly damaged by corruption charges, involving millions of dollars, which they hurled at each other and their families during two television debates last week.

"If a fraction of what they said is true, either of these two should be in jail, not competing for the presidency," one political source said.

Mr. Bulatovic accused the 35-year-old prime minister of smuggling cigarettes and drugs and of embezzling money from the state pension fund.

Mr. Djukanovic denied the accusations, as did Mr. Bulatovic when he was accused in turn of stealing \$15 million destined for the purchase of two Boeings for Montenegrin Airways.

The criminality issue, which Mr. Bulatovic also exploited during the first round, struck a chord with voters who saw a class of new rich emerge during the black market era that flourished during U.N. sanctions against Yugoslavia.

While most economic activity slowed nearly to a halt under the 1992-95 sanctions, imposed for Yugoslavia's role in the Bosnian war, the new elite flaunted its emblems — imported sports cars and mobile phones — on Montenegrin's Adriatic Riviera.

The corruption dispute overshadowed the political stakes between Mr. Bulatovic, the candidate of Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, and Mr. Djukanovic who has led a drive to liberalise the republic's economy.

The prime minister, an avowed foe of Mr. Milosevic and the system of tight socialist state controls he enforces in Yugoslavia, has pitched successfully for U.S. and West European

support for his reforms. His political backers feared his credibility abroad could be affected by the accusations made against him.

Although Mr. Bulatovic suffered a series of political defeats since his break with Mr. Djukanovic last year, the first round result showed he was more popular than expected with ordinary voters.

His warning that Mr. Djukanovic's fight with Mr. Milosevic could lead to Montenegro's secession from Yugoslavia gained the support of Serb loyalists frightened of confrontation.

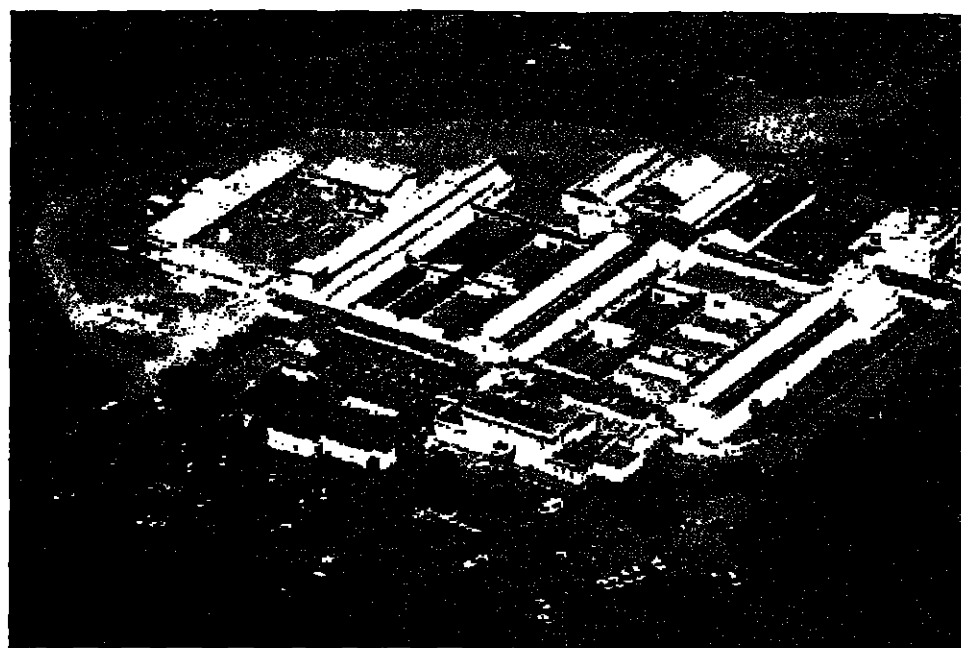
First round results, showing that Muslim and ethnic Albanian voters supported Mr. Djukanovic, also swung nationalist support behind Mr. Bulatovic.

Victory for Mr. Bulatovic would give limited help to Mr. Milosevic whose own political position has been weakened by setbacks for his ruling Socialist Party (SPS) in Serbian presidential and parliamentary elections.

It would chiefly ensure the Djukanovic was denied a seat on the supreme defence council composed of the presidents of Yugoslavia, Serbia and Montenegro.

Defeat for Mr. Djukanovic would be relative. He would remain prime minister with control of parliament, most of the state bureaucracy and the police.

The prime minister promised opposition parties he would hold parliamentary elections next month in return for their support of his bid for the presidency.



An aerial view of Paparua Prison near Christ church where five prison guards have been taken hostage by inmates (Reuters photo)

N. Zealand hostage-taking inmates granted help

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand (AFP) — Four prison officers at Paparua prison near here had an emotional reunion with families and colleagues Sunday when they were freed after a 26-hour standoff in an explosive-wired prison wing. Authorities at Paparua prison announced an end to the drama shortly before 7:00 p.m. (0700 GMT).

When the hostages were released to waiting colleagues, emotions boiled over in jubilant scenes of hugging, tears and applause, NZPA reported Sunday.

In return for releasing the hostages and surrendering all weapons, the four inmates who masterminded the plan to take them captive will be allowed to consult senior Auckland criminal lawyer Kevin Ryan and Private investigator Bryan Rowe. The inmates will be able to explain their grievances to the two and seek advice on their claims of injustice and police incompetence.

The inmates said they had taken hostages to get a criminal cases review commission set up. Two other prison officers — one of them a woman — taken hostage Saturday were freed earlier.

All hostages were unharmed, but very tired and emotional, Canterbury prisons Manager Paul Monk said.

During the siege, 80 inmates, including 22 convicted murderers, were barricaded into the wing with the six hostages. Sticks of gelignite smuggled into the prison were allegedly wired to the front door and door of the manager's office, where the officers were held.

Prison staff would not comment on how the guards were taken hostage.

Mr. Monk said it was too early to say how many of the inmates were involved or whether any would face charges. "We had a process of very lengthy negotiations. Although they were not easy, we managed to establish a rapport with the hostages. We treated the threats very seriously."

Corrections Minister Paul East said late Sunday that all security measures at Paparua prison would be reviewed in the wake of the weekend's security breach. Prison officers fearing for the safety of their colleagues and other inmates demanded that the crisis be settled by negotiation and not by force.

"While we can't condone

what the inmates are doing we acknowledge their level of desperation and frustration."

Public Service Association prison organiser Brian Davies said.

An inquiry is needed to explain how Paparua prison inmates could overwhelm six guards and hold them hostage, Labour justice spokesman Phil Goff said Sunday night. "Getting explosives and weapons into the prison shows a fundamental lack of security."

Mr. Goff said a dangerous precedent would be set if demands of the inmates were met by prison management negotiators. "As soon as the message goes out that if you (as an inmate) get yourself into that position your demands will be met then you have a huge incentive for others to do likewise. There ought to be an enormous reluctance to concede to the wishes of the prisoners."

Mr. Goff said Mr. Haig had written to him about 10 times in the past 18 months, pleading for help. Mr. Haig claims he was wrongly imprisoned for the 1994 murder of Mark Roderique, a crewman on Mr. Haig's fishing boat, who was last seen on board the boat after a fight with Mr. Haig and his nephew, David Hogan.

March next year.

Mr. Obuchi plans to visit Russia within this year, the sources said.

The territorial row over the southern Kuril Islands, annexed by Soviet troops in the closing days of World War II by disputed historical and legal claims, has prevented Tokyo and Moscow from signing a postwar peace treaty.

But Mr. Hashimoto in July proposed joint development of energy resources in Siberia and the Russian Far East as part of a new diplomatic approach towards Moscow, based on "trust, mutual benefit and long-term viewpoint."

He said promotion of ties across wide-ranging areas could help break an impasse in the territorial talks. Tokyo had balked at extending full economic cooperation with Moscow because of the dispute.

Japan and Russia have earlier agreed on a visit to Japan by Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin sometime between January and

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Governments should seek U.N. help to fight money laundering — Interpol

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Interpol Sunday urged governments to take help of United Nations-endorsed conventions to fight money laundering.

The international police organisation also said it would start a global crackdown against fraudulent financial transactions to stem corruption and drug trafficking.

"We are launching an attack on organised crime and the most effective way to deal with it is to take away its financial back-up," Interpol Secretary General Robert Kendall told the Press Trust of India in an interview.

Mr. Kendall, who is attending an ongoing Interpol conference in New Delhi, said illegal money transactions across the world could amount to more than \$500 billion annually.

He said states could use a 1988 U.N. convention on money laundering and drug trafficking and added individual governments should also draft laws to prevent the illegal flow of money across their borders.

"Some of these countries have now amended their laws for the purpose."

"Several others still do not have proper legislations to check money laundering even though fraudulent commercial operations can constitute serious threat to the economies of victim

countries.

"There seems to be certain unwillingness among some countries to use international conventions to tackle corruption or money laundering issues legally," Mr. Kendall claimed.

He said fraudulent commercial operations are mainly conducted by people ranging from legitimate businessmen, to avoid paying taxes, to drug traffickers or smugglers trying to send money abroad.

"International money laundering is currently one of the most worrying forms of international crime and a distinction should be made between tax evasion and laundering of proceeds of crime."

Interpol says funds are siphoned through several means such as bogus firms, sale of shares and bonds overseas, shady trading, computer and maritime frauds and through copyright infringements.

"Vast amounts of illegal money being transacted globally on a daily basis can be carried out only by qualified accountants, lawyers and financial experts, besides computer professionals," Mr. Kendall argued.

Most of the illicit money exchanges are done along with drug trafficking and the annual amount can be much more than \$500 billion estimated by the U.N., the Interpol chief added.

Philippines braces for strongest typhoon in 2 years

MANILA (AFP) — The northern Philippines battered down against typhoon Ivan, the strongest typhoon in the country in two years, with military units going on standby just hours before the storm was due to make landfall.

Over the past six hours, Ivan's peak winds weakened to 175 kilometres an hour, down by 10 kilometres an hour, but was still gusting at 215 kilometres an hour as it came within 150 kilometres of land, weathermen said.

It was forecast to lash the northeastern tip of the main island of Luzon anytime before midnight (1600 GMT).

Military units in the northern Philippines were mobilised for possible rescue and relief work over 18 provinces which were forecast to be affected.

The typhoon was forecast to spare Manila, which in November 1995 bore the brunt of super-typhoon Angela which killed nearly 800 people.

Weathermen raised the third stage of a four-scale alert over the province of Cagayan and the nearby province of Isabela, and warned coastal residents of the Cagayan Valley region to "seek higher grounds due to possible coastal flooding and big waves."

An advisory also warned of "rough to phenomenal seas" within a 300-kilometre radius, deemed "dangerous

to all types of seacraft."

Heavy rain lashed Cagayan early Sunday as the typhoon approached, but there were no reports of casualties or damage, radio station DZRH reported.

Armed Forces chief General Arnolfo Acorda ordered military commanders in Cagayan Valley and the central Luzon region, north of Manila, to "take appropriate action" and to mobilise for "rescue, relief and rehabilitation efforts" if necessary.

A military statement said the army, air force and navy were also alerted to provide "appropriate equipment and trained personnel" as needed.

The eye of the storm was 150 kilometres northeast of the town of Casiguran at 4:00 p.m. It was forecast to move northwest at 15 kilometres an hour and be near the sparsely populated Calayan Islands Monday afternoon, the weather bureau's latest bulletin said.

About 20 typhoons and storms lash the Philippines every year. This year they have so far accounted for about 47 deaths including the sinking of a ferry in August.

Disaster officials say poor public warning systems, sub-standard housing materials, inadequate rescue equipment and sheer foolishness in the face of nature's wrath account for a good portion of the casualties.

Bosnian Serb hardliners confirm they will take part in elections

PALE, Bosnia-Herzegovina (AFP) — Hardline Bosnian Serbs loyal to former Leader Radovan Karadzic thrust aside their reservations and decided to take part in polls in the Bosnian Serb entity next month, SRNA news agency said Sunday.

"The main committee of the Serb Democratic Party (SDS) has decided to take part in the legislative and presidential elections," a statement carried by the Bosnian Serb news agency said.

Legislative elections are due to take place in the Bosnian Serb entity on Nov. 23 under the supervision of

the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

They could help resolve a lengthy power struggle between the Serb member of the Bosnian Presidency Momcilo Krajisnik, a hardliner based in Pale, and Bosnian Serb President Biljana Plavsic, based in Banja Luka who is backed by the international community.

The SDS said previously it wanted other elections to be held on Dec. 7 for Ms. Plavsic's and Ms. Krajisnik's posts but the international community has yet to take a decision on this issue.

SRNA also reported that there had been a reshuffle in the leadership of the SDS, with the leadership "reorganised."

It said that Aleksa Buha who was appointed "interim president" when Mr. Karadzic was forced to step down in July 1996, had become "acting president" of a six-member party presidency, which included Ms. Krajisnik.

Analysts say that the move downgraded Ms. Buha and boosted Ms. Krajisnik while the press in Belgrade said it appeared to have confirmed a split in the SDS hierarchy between the two.

Kohl faces fresh dissent within own ranks

BONN (R) — Chancellor Helmut Kohl faced a fresh barrage of dissent from the ranks of his Christian Democrats (CDU) Sunday over his pledge to rule Germany until 2002 if he wins next year's general election.

In an impromptu announcement last week, Mr. Kohl, 67, who had already said he intended to stand for a record fifth term in the September 1998 poll, quashed speculation he might step down in mid-term saying he would serve all four years.

Mr. Kohl has already become Germany's longest serving chancellor this century by leading his centre-right coalition government since 1982. Staying until 2002 would take him past the 19 years that "iron chancellor" Otto von Bismarck served in the last century without the inconvenience of elections.

CDU deputy parliamentary leader Heiner Geissler welcomed Mr. Kohl's public announcement of long-time right wing apparent.

Wolfgang Schauble, but he criticised Mr. Kohl's intent to cling on to power for another five years.

"It only makes sense to announce a successor when he is about to take over. After all, we are not a hereditary

monarchy," Mr. Geissler told Bild am Sonntag newspaper in an interview.

"Even the Pope doesn't name his successor," he said. Michael Glos, a prominent member of the CDU's Bavarian sister party the Christian Social Union (CSU), also criticised Mr. Kohl saying that although Mr. Schauble was a good choice, it was premature of Mr. Kohl to address the issue now.

Mr. Glos told N-TV all-news television station Mr. Kohl had no right to determine such an important issue without consulting his Bavarian allies first.

Members of a loose grouping of ambitious CDU backbenchers and regional leaders known as the "young wild bunch" chimed in, reiterating their demand for Mr. Kohl to step aside earlier to make way for fresh blood at the top.

CDU General Secretary Peter Hintze brushed off their criticism in a statement declaring that the veteran leader had ample "strength and joy" to complete another term in office, adding that the discussion was "superfluous".

Mr. Kohl, often dubbed the "eternal chancellor", also played down his image of the immovable monarch and told

ZDF television he was convinced his whole election team had a winning ticket.

"I'm not going into the election, as it were, holding a banner that says 'I am the chancellor', but we expect a number of colleagues to figure importantly in this and earlier (regional state) election campaigns," Mr. Kohl said, according to the text of the interview to be broadcast later in the day.

Mr. Kohl dismissed speculation the CDU might form a grand coalition with the opposition Social Democrats if its junior partners, the Free Democrats (FDP), flunk the five per cent hurdle to return to the Bonn parliament as predicted by polls.

Ernst research group surveys this month showed support for the FDP fluctuating between four and six per cent.

"I will not form a grand coalition. I do not predict this to be the (election) result," Mr. Kohl said, adding that this was also the view of Mr. Schauble, who is the CDU's parliamentary group leader in Bonn.

Speculation about a grand coalition was prompted after Mr. Kohl announced Mr. Schauble would be his successor last week.

Kangaroo leads police on five-hour chase

MELBOURNE, Australia (AFP) — A 1.5 metres kangaroo caught police on the hop Sunday, leading them on a five-hour chase through the streets of Melbourne. The eastern grey roo, weighing 32 kilograms, was eventually cornered, netted and wrestled to the ground by wildlife officers after a romp through the city streets that began at 5 a.m. (1800 GMT Saturday).

A police spokeswoman said the two-year-old male was first spotted about 10 kilometres from the city centre and led his pursuers through four northern suburbs before being snared and returned to the bush.

Kangaroos, Australia's national symbol, are nocturnal and for this reason are seldom seen in the bush, let alone in the city.

Police said this one probably entered the city by following bush which begins in the foothills of the Great Dividing Range and erupts into the Yarra River in the city's inner eastern suburbs.

Wildlife officers said it was stressed by its experience but otherwise unharmed. Although not generally aggressive, kangaroos, which can weigh up to 66 kilograms and grow to 2.1 metres tall, can be dangerous when cornered.

Primakov to visit Tokyo in November — report

TOKYO (AFP) — Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov will visit Japan on Nov. 14 for talks with Foreign Minister Keizo Obuchi, Kyodo News reported Sunday quoting government sources here.

The visit will follow a summit meeting between Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto and Russian President Boris Yeltsin on Nov. 1-2 in the Siberian industrial city of Krasnoyarsk.

The Japanese government plans to hold "continuous political dialogue" with Russia after the summit to solve a decades-old territorial dispute. Kyodo quoted Foreign Ministry sources as saying.

Japan and Russia have earlier agreed on a visit to Japan by Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin sometime between January and

March next year.

Mr. Obuchi plans to visit Russia within this year, the sources said.

The territorial row over the southern Kuril Islands, annexed by Soviet troops in the closing days of World War II by disputed historical and legal claims, has prevented Tokyo and Moscow from signing a postwar peace treaty.

But Mr. Hashimoto in July proposed joint development of energy resources in Siberia and the Russian Far East as part of a new diplomatic approach towards Moscow, based on "trust, mutual benefit and long-term viewpoint."

He said promotion of ties across wide-ranging areas could help break an impasse in the territorial talks. Tokyo had balked at extending full economic cooperation with Moscow because of the dispute.

Antarctic rock core samples hold clues to ancient climate conditions

AUCKLAND (AFP) — Scientists in Antarctica said Sunday they have just recovered rock core samples from 150 metres below the ocean surface which will reveal climatic conditions dating back to between 30 and 100 million years.

Fifty-one scientists from 28 institutions around the world are analysing and describing the core as it is recovered by a drill team working at Cape Roberts in Antarctica, 140 kilometres north of Scott Base.

A statement Sunday

from Antarctica New Zealand which manages the Cape Roberts Project said a 20-tonne rig sits on the sea ice about 1.6 metres thick and extracts the rock core from 150 metres below the surface.

Chief scientist for the project, Victoria University Professor Peter Barrett, said the team recovered its first sample Friday, after a week spent cementing the drill casing into basement rock.

Mr. Barrett said the first

clues as to how the Antarctic ice sheet might have changed in relation to past climate will emerge over the next few days, but more detailed analysis would occupy scientists around the world for years to come.

Sediments recovered to date appear to be of glacial and volcanic origin, with microfossils indicating they are less than two million years old, the statement said.

Mr. Barrett said it was now a race against time to

extract as much core rock — a hoped-for 800 metres by late November — while temperatures remained cool and the sea ice stable.

The eight million NZ dollar (\$5 million) project, with funding from the United States, Italy, New Zealand, Britain, Germany and Australia, is the focus for international debate and interest about the stability of the ice sheets and whether they are susceptible to human-induced climate change.

'China sought to donate to U.S. campaigns'

LOS ANGELES (R) — China decided to contribute at least \$2 million to U.S. congressional races and other political campaigns in 1996 as part of an influence-buying effort, the Los Angeles Times reported Sunday.

Efforts by the FBI and other federal agencies to investigate the alleged plan have been thwarted by what officials regard as money-laundering efforts, the newspaper said, citing U.S. officials.

The FBI was tipped off to the alleged plan as early as 1995 through intercepted communications between the Chinese embassy in Washington and the Beijing government, the newspaper said.

Chinese officials have denied they made any illegal contributions to U.S. political campaigns, it said.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation warned six members of Congress about the Chinese's government's alleged efforts to buy influence in early 1996, the report said.

FBI officials also notified the White House's National Security Council, but NSC officials considered the warning so vague that they did not pass it on to more senior aides or President Bill Clinton until after current controversies over campaign fund raising broke in the news media, the report said.

Probes into the alleged campaign donations have gone cold due to what FBI officials consider deliberate efforts to hide the money trail, the report said.

Suicide myth debunked by expert

WASHINGTON (R) — Contrary to popular myth, people who talk about suicide often do carry through with it and should be taken seriously, a mental illness expert said Sunday.

"The bottom line is do something. If someone is thinking about suicide, they're not going to get better by themselves," Dr. Douglas Jacobs told the American Medical Association's annual science reporters' conference.

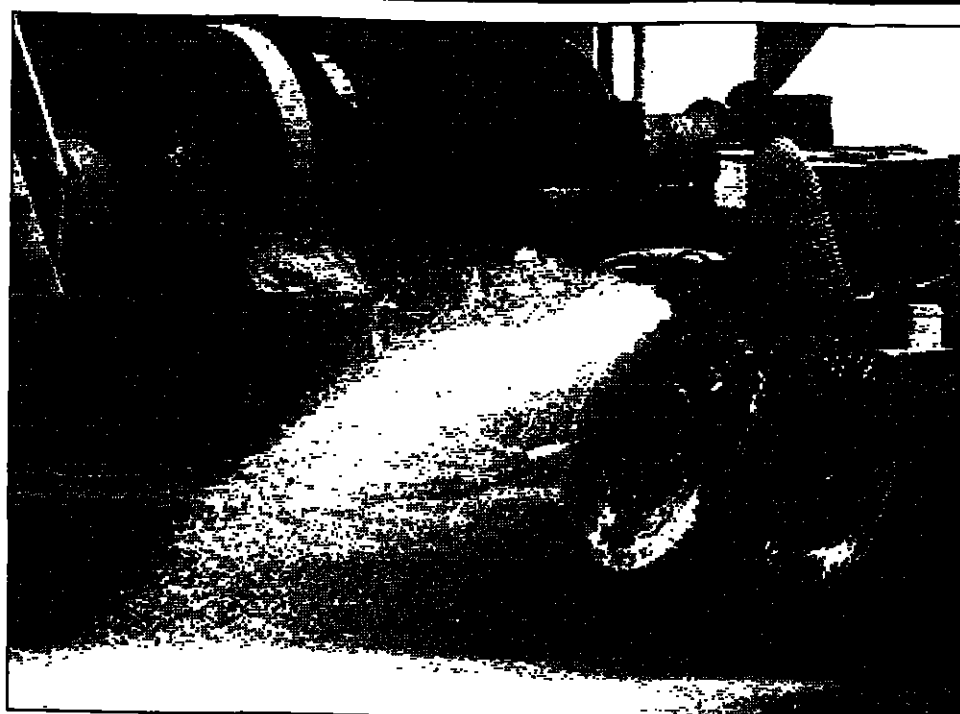
Dr. Jacobs, executive director of the National Mental Illness Screening Project, said most completed suicides in the United States potentially could have been avoided if people had sought help for an underlying psychiatric illness.

"Suicide is not a diagnosis. It is a most unfortunate outcome of treatable psychiatric illness, usually depression, schizophrenia or alcohol or substance abuse."

An estimated 17 to 20 million Americans suffered from depression each year, he said. Between 31,000 and 32,000 people successfully commit suicide every year, according to figures from the National Centre for Health Statistics.

Dr. Jacobs, who also is an associate professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School in Boston, said the general public needed to understand that thinking or talking about suicide was not normal, but rather an indication that the person needed to be evaluated by a psychiatric or other health care professional.

"More than 90 per cent of completed suicides meet criteria for psychiatric illness, but only a third of them are receiving treatment at the time of their death," he told the conference.



A pollution control worker sprays oil solvent into the Straits of Singapore after 25,000 tonnes of oil was discharged into the sea after a collision between two oil-carrying vessels (Renter photo)

Jiang defends China's rights record, rules out release of dissidents

HONG KONG (AFP) — Chinese President Jiang Zemin defended his country's much criticised rights record saying human rights and the system for its protection in China "are advancing."

In an interview with Time magazine ahead of his scheduled U.S. visit this month, Mr. Jiang said China's "consistent policy is to protect human rights according to law."

"We have made it clear that we respect human rights," Mr. Jiang told Time in a copy of the interview released to AFP ahead of distribution Monday.

He also rejected calls for the release of Wei Jingsheng and Wang Dan, two of China's most famous political prisoners, as a gesture of goodwill to the United States which has been a vocal critic of China's human rights record.

"I don't believe they (Mr. Wei and Mr. Wang) pose much of a threat to China's security and stability," Mr. Jiang said.

"They were brought to justice not because they are so-called political dissidents, but because they violated China's criminal law."

"Decisions on when prisoners in China's jails are released are matters for the judicial department to settle according to the law," he added.

Human rights groups and Chinese dissidents have urged Mr. Jiang to release Mr. Wei and Mr. Wang before his landmark U.S. visit on Oct. 26 to Nov. 2.

Mr. Wei, 47, is a veteran Chinese political prisoner and has enjoyed only six months of freedom in the past 18 years. He was condemned in December 1995 to 14 years in prison for sedition.

Mr. Wang, 27, sentenced to 11 years in prison in 1996 for "counter-revolutionary crimes", had already spent four years behind bars for his role in the 1989 Tiananmen Square pro-democracy protests violently suppressed by the authorities.

Pope gives humble French saint top place in church

VATICAN CITY (R) — Pope John Paul Sunday elevated St. Therese of Lisieux, the humble French saint who inspired mother Teresa to a lifetime of devotion, to a privileged place in the male-dominated Roman Catholic Church.

The Pope pronounced the child nun, who died 100 years ago aged 24, a Doctor of the Church — a rank reserved for a handful of saints whose spirituality has deeply influenced the life of the church and who are deemed some of its best teachers.

St. Therese becomes the 33rd Doctor of the Church, joining such revered figures as St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Augustine.

But the nun, whose framed photograph was displayed above the entrance to St. Peter's during the ceremony, is only the third female doctor in a church which bans women priests.

The others, the mystics St. Teresa of Avila and St. Catherine of Siena, were made Doctors of the Church in 1970.

"Among the Doctors of the Church, Therese of the child Jesus and holy face is the youngest, but her spiritual itinerary shows such maturity and the intuitions

of her faith expressed in her writings are so vast and so profound, that they merit a place among the great spiritual masters," the Pope said in his homily.

St. Therese entered a Carmelite convent at the age of 15 after travelling to Rome and appealing to Pope Leo XIII to overrule the local church which had declared her too young.

She died nine years later in 1897 of tuberculosis. Her fame spread rapidly after publication of her diary, "Story of a Soul", which advocated that holiness is for everyone.

The simply-written account of the woman who came to be known as "little flower" was a sensational success. In it, she advocated the "little way" of simple trust in God and showed that anyone, no matter how ordinary, could achieve holiness.

The Pope, looking relatively well in gold robes, presided over the open-air ceremony in a packed St. Peter's Square. The saint's relics, brought from France, were in a special gold urn to his right and will remain in St. Peter's until Tuesday.

Nuns and followers showered the urn with red and white rose petals after the Pontiff declared St.

Therese a Doctor of the Church, recalling her words that after her death she would let fall "a shower of roses", or favours.

Miracles attributed to her intercession were widely claimed and the nun was canonised in 1925, becoming one of the most popular saints in modern times.

Mother Teresa of Calcutta, who died last month after a life helping the poor and dying in India which earned her universal reverence as "Saint of the gutters", took her name from the French saint and said her greatest inspiration came from her call: "To do the little things of life with great love."

St. Therese is co-patroness of France, along with the Virgin Mary, Joan of Arc and St. Martin. The Pope said he chose Oct. 19, missions Sunday, for the ceremony since St. Therese is also co-patroness of missionaries.

The 77-year-old Pope has repeatedly held up St. Therese as a shining example to young people.

"Therese of Lisieux is a saint who remains young, despite the years that pass, and she is an eminent model and for Christians of our day along the road to the third millennium," he said.

Oil scooped from sea as Singapore fights worst oil slick

SINGAPORE (AFP) — Backed by Japanese equipment and experts, Singapore deployed 45 ships Sunday to scoop up patches of oil that dotted its seas four days after two tankers collided and caused the island's worst oil spill.

As skimmers were used to scoop up the patches of weathered oil, Republic of Singapore Air Force (RSAF) helicopters circled overhead to monitor the movement and location of the pollutants, officials said.

"The clean up process of the oil spill is still ongoing and has entered into the next stage where the emphasis is on recovery of oil," said a statement from the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA).

It added that 45 vessels had been deployed to col-

lect oil from the sea and lay booms to protect the island city from further contamination.

Environment Minister Yeo Cheow Tong told reporters that the potential damage from the oil slick was contained because of Singapore's readiness to fight such an environmental disaster.

"A disaster of that scale in most other places will have led to huge areas being contaminated," he was quoted by the Television Corporation of Singapore as saying late Sunday.

Japanese oil spill experts joined the round-the-clock operation Sunday with two oil recovery systems loaned from the Petroleum Association of Japan.

A team of environmental protection and maritime experts from Australia were also due here to help out in

pollution control.

Some 25,000 tonnes of marine fuel oil spilled into the busy Singapore Strait after a collision between the Thai-registered crude carrier Orapiin Global and Cyprus-flagged oil tanker Evoikos last Wednesday. The collision badly damaged the Evoikos, which was carrying 120,000 tonnes of marine fuel oil from the United Arab Emirates. The crude carrier was empty at the time of the collision.

There are fears that the oil spill could ruin some of the better coral reefs off heavily-developed Singapore. Saturday, a helicopter was used to spray chemical dispersants on the oil spill, contained in the waters to the west of Singapore.

The MPA statement said no oil was spotted in the east of Singapore and that

additional booms had been placed at Sentosa, a favourite tourist spot.

"Aerial recon by RSAF helicopters to monitor the movement and location of the oil patches continued," the statement said.

The ship collision was still under investigation. MPA officials have said that the ships collided despite a radio warning from the MPA — acknowledged by both vessels — that radar showed they were on a collision course.

Press reports said one of the vessels may have been sailing in the wrong lane. Under a traffic separation scheme, vessels plying the strait are given specific lanes to sail along. Singapore is one of the world's busiest ports, with over 10,000 vessels arriving each month.

Dissident's mother hopes Jiang's U.S. trip will win son release

BEDING (AFP) — The mother of Chinese dissident Wang Dan is hoping her son will be released before President Jiang Zemin's landmark trip to the United States this month, a human rights group said Sunday.

Wang Yulin, who last saw her son on Oct. 11, said Wang Dan is suffering from bad pharyngitis caused by the onslaught of the cold weather and thinks he may have a cancerous brain tumour, said a statement from the Information Centre of Human Rights and Democratic Movement in China.

He wrote twice to the Justice Ministry at the end of September urging authorities to release him on medical grounds, or at the very least to transfer him to Beijing where his family lives.

Wang Dan, 27, is held in Jinzhou, in the province of Liaoning, about 500 kilometres northeast of Beijing. Under Chinese law, prisoners must be held near their homes, the association said.

Wang Dan was sentenced in 1996 to 11 years in prison for "counter-revolutionary crimes" including joining a correspondence course offered by an American university.

He had already spent four years behind bars for his role in the 1989 Tiananmen Square pro-democracy protests which were violently suppressed by the authorities.

Mr. Jiang is to visit the United States from Oct. 26 to Nov. 2. But there has been a clamour of calls for him to make a gesture for political prisoners, including the most famous Wei Jingsheng.

Mr. Wei has been in detention since 1979 apart from a brief six-months of freedom at the end of 1993.

Papon trial dredges up murk about Algerian massacre

BORDEAUX, France (AFP) — As the trial of alleged war criminal Maurice Papon enters its third week Monday, the case is certainly forcing France to face up to its murky past — and in more ways than some expected.

The trial, centred on Mr. Papon's role in deporting more than 1,500 Jews to Nazi death camps, was always likely to focus on individuals' — and France's — blame for acts carried out under the wartime Vichy regime in occupied France.

But a less expected controversy has erupted over a 1961 massacre of Algerians in Paris, allegedly by police who dumped dozens of bodies into the Seine River. Mr. Papon, now 87, was Paris police chief at the time.

Official records say only three people died in the Oct. 17, 1961, incident when police clashed with demonstrators at the height of Algeria's struggle for independence from France, achieved the following year.

Algerian groups claim more than 200 died as police tried to break up the demonstration, organised by the Algerian National Liberation Front (FLN), the main pro-independence group at the time.

At the end of the day, 60 bodies were fished out or found hanged. Mr. Papon claimed in court last week that many died in inter-factional fighting, among

Algerians. But historian Jean-Luc Einaudi told the Bordeaux Assize Court that the police had opened fire on Algerians. "Police officers could be seen throwing those killed into the Seine," he said.

Friday evening some 1,000 demonstrators gathered under a Seine bridge at a memorial rally, shouting "Papon, killer of Jews and Algerians" and throwing wreaths and dummies into the Seine.

Interior Minister Jean-Pierre Chevènement said last week that he is "quite ready to seek the truth" about the killings, while Culture Minister Catherine Trautmann confirmed that secret archives from the period would be opened, although they would normally remain closed for 60 years.

Sunday the Journal du Dimanche quoted one official as pouring scorn on Mr. Papon's theory of inter-factional violence. "I don't believe it was rivalry killing," said Constantin Melnik, a government aide at the time.

But while insisting there was no official order to shoot to kill, he said there were "multiple and tragic slips by the police forces ... there was never an order to kill Arabs."

"I don't believe that Maurice Papon gave, in any way, permission to kill," he said.

This echoed the comments of former Premier

Pierre Messmer in the Bordeaux Court last week. "A government official cannot be held responsible for these events, because he was obeying a government," he said.

"According to the military intelligence services, these drownings were due largely to National Liberation Front agents who seized on the opportunity to liquidate opponents," he said.

The claims about the 1961 massacre led last week to an Algerian newspaper accusing France of double standards: by bringing Mr. Papon to book over deporting Jews, but not over allegedly killing Algerians.

The El Moudjahid newspaper said the crackdown was a crime against humanity that Paris "had failed to avoid and, worse, attempted by all means to muffle or even cover up."

Meanwhile Mr. Papon's trial is due to resume Monday, and to continue cross-examining Mr. Papon's personal account until the middle of week, when it will turn to an examination of the historical background to the events.

Mr. Papon, who has been allowed to remain free for the duration of the trial, returned for the weekend to his home at Gretz-Armainvilliers outside Paris. He is due back in court at 1:30 p.m. (1130 GMT) Monday to resume his defence.

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Ordeal has to end

THE LATEST reports from the International Court of Justice at the Hague suggest that both the U.S. and Britain are on the verge of changing their long-held legal objections to trying two Libyan nationals accused of bombing a Pan American aircraft over Scotland a decade ago in a neutral country. What could have influenced this change of heart, or mind, are two reasons. One is legal and the other is quasi-legal. The legal justification for reviewing the initial rejection of Tripoli's offer to have the two Libyans tried under neutral jurisdiction stems from the fact that Tripoli has the right, according to international law, to refuse to extradite its citizens for criminal trial in a foreign country. Over and above this international law constraint, an overwhelming number of countries has national laws that disallow the extradition of their nationals for criminal prosecution in foreign lands. Libya is no exception.

The second explanation for the reluctant acceptance of the Libyan stance is the position of the victims of the bombed Pan-Am Flight 800 which crashed over Lockerbie in 1988. The relatives of the victims are now in favour of holding a trial in a neutral state rather than not having a trial at all. The sooner a trial takes place, the affected relatives now argue, the sooner it would be possible to resolve all the pending legal questions and the litigations that could ensue therefrom. Delaying action for much longer would render any fair trial near impossible, not to mention that the U.S. and U.K. would in effect be responsible for putting off the rendering of justice in this case.

What could possibly be the legal and moral objections to holding the elusive trial of the two suspects in, say, Geneva, Vienna or Stockholm. As long as the concerned parties are interested in a fair trial and are indeed seeking justice, why put it on hold and in the process perpetuate the agonies of everybody involved, including those of the Libyan people who have had to put up with punitive measures for so long. It is time to lean towards problem-solving, to show compassion and statesmanship to end what has been an ordeal for all concerned.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

MOHAMMAD SUBEHI, a writer for Al Arab Al Yawm, Sunday criticised remarks by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali in Aqaba where he said that the Muslim Brotherhood is only a religious group not concerned in elections and that the government will not allow any group to call on the public to boycott the general elections. The writer said the Muslim Brotherhood is a religious and political group whether the prime minister admits this or not and that the group has been active in the political arena for decades. Whenever the government is in need of the Muslim Brotherhood in times of national crisis it considers it as a political group and when it boycotts the elections over differences in views with the government it is considered as a mere religious group, the writer pointed out. He said if the Muslim Brotherhood was not a political group why then did the government open a dialogue with Abdul Majid Thuneibat, the overall head of the Muslim Brotherhood, asked the writer. He said that according to the Jordanian law, calling on the public to boycott the elections is not a crime and is not illegal as the prime minister had said. Of course, if some people try to obstruct the course of elections materially or create disturbance at the voting centres they would be breaking the law, according to the writer. He said that it is the right for all opposition groups to boycott and call for boycotting the elections because they have the right of free expression under a democracy and in a country that respects political pluralism.

DR. SALAH JARRAR, a writer for Al Ra'i daily, attacked some foreign countries, including the U.S., for their open enmity towards Iraq and their repeated attempts on partitioning the Iraqi nation and launching acts of aggression on the Iraqi people. Turkey for its part has repeatedly launched aggression on the Iraqi Kurdish regions, thus flagrantly violating the sovereignty of Iraq. Iran which continues to criticise Turkish incursions into Iraqi territory has itself launched air raids on Iranian dissidents living in Iraq; and the U.S. which repeatedly denounces Iranian but not Turkish acts of aggression has been threatening to repeat its aggression on Iraq and has sent its fleet to the Gulf region in preparation for yet another aggression on the Iraqi nation, said the writer. He said that Turkey, Iran, the U.S. are all playing a game which is designed to serve the Zionists who want to see Iraq continually falling under domination, weak and unable to rise up again and create a power that might threaten the Jewish state or put an end to its aggression on the Arab World.

Economic Review

By Dr. Yusuf Mansur

On the success of Jordan's economic reform programmes

LATELY, THERE have been several attacks on the success of the economic reform and adjustment programmes, which successive governments have undertaken to implement in the past few years. Whether these programmes have benefited the Jordanian economy or not is an important question that needs to be addressed, and the answer is the affirmative.

Jordan's economic reform and adjustment programmes centred on liberalising the flow of trade and capital, redefining the role of the state, increasing the role of the private sector in the economy, and encouraging export-oriented investment and production as the vehicle for economic growth.

Furthermore, adjustment efforts have aimed at appealing to the long-standing external and internal imbalances, maintaining a stable exchange rate, curbing inflation, and creating a sustainable Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate. These programmes have been followed carefully (somewhat too carefully in my view) and implemented effectively, according to international observers such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

To judge the effectiveness of these programmes, one must review what has happened in the economy since 1989. The following are some empirical observations of the macro-economy.

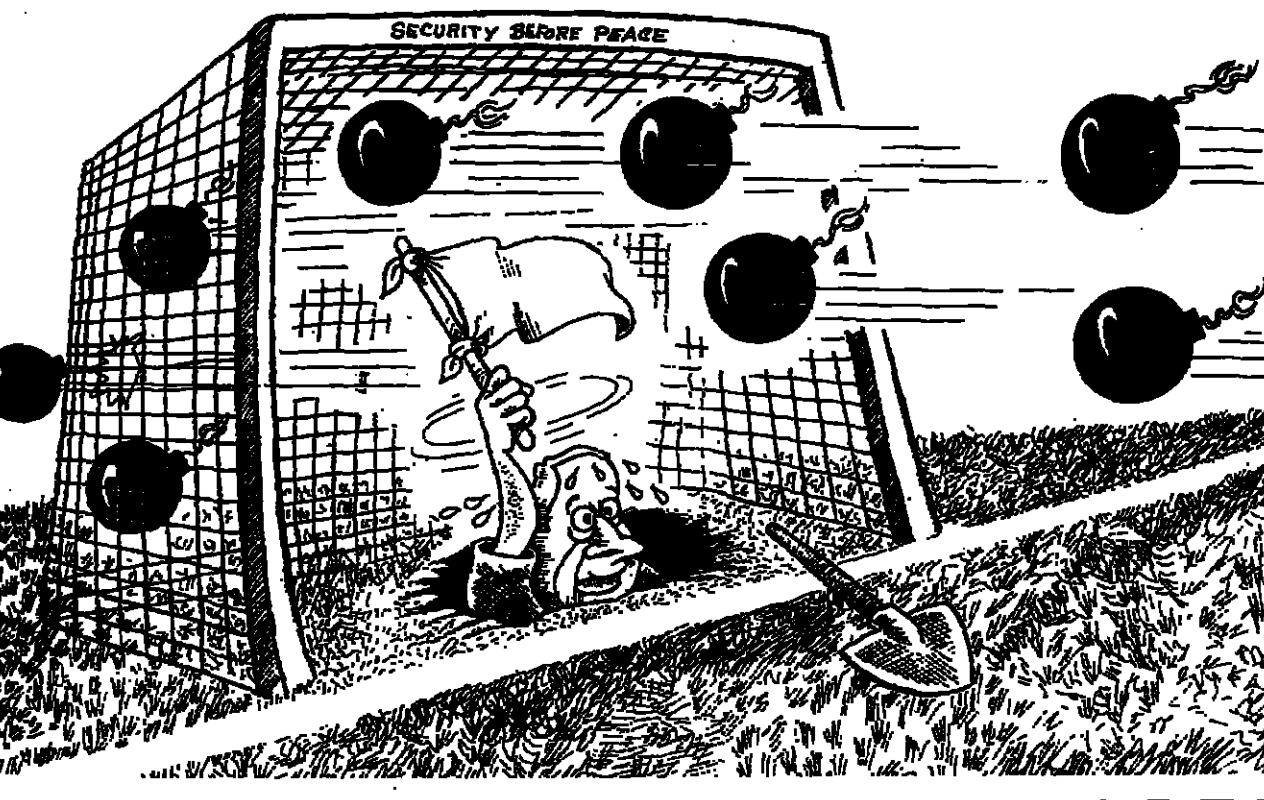
- Achieving an average real GDP growth rate of 6.5 per cent through the years 1990-96, which places Jordan at the top of the heap.
- Reducing the deficit in the current account of the balance of payment from 19 per cent in 1989 to 4 per cent of GDP by the end of 1996.
- Lowering the current deficit by JD154 million, with signs that this trend will continue over the medium and long range.
- Bringing down the budget deficit to 4 per cent of GDP by the end of 1996.
- Lowering external debt from 190 per cent of GDP in 1989 to 100 per cent by the end of 1996, and lowering the debt service ratio from 45 per cent in 1989 to less than 20 per cent in 1996.
- Maintaining a stable exchange rate while increasing Jordan's foreign currency reserves to \$650 million by the end of 1996 and to \$1.5 billion presently.
- Increasing the rate of domestic

savings in 1996 to 14.1 per cent of GDP — this rate was negative three years ago.

- Maintaining the investment rate at 33 per cent of GDP, with private sector contributions accounting for over 80 per cent of total investment.
- Reducing the inflation rate from 25.6 per cent in 1989 to 6.5 per cent by the end of 1996, with signs that this rate will fall further in 1997.
- And reducing the unemployment rate from 25 per cent to 15 per cent by the year 1996 and 14 per cent in 1997.

In light of all these undeniably positive developments, Jordan has done well during the implementation period of these programmes. Whether one can prove beyond a shadow of doubt that these programmes are the reasons Jordan has done so well is probably impossible at this stage. However, the glaring fact remains that the reform programmes have coincided with an excellent growth period in Jordan's history. Therefore, even the most vehement critic cannot deny that the economic reform and adjustment programmes have contributed positively to the growth of Jordan.

M. KAHIL



Missed opportunities to unseat Netanyahu?

By Haim Baram

THERE IS an old Israeli joke about a citizen who telephoned the ministry of defence in February 1983, a few days after the forced resignation of Ariel Sharon over the massacre in the Beirut refugee camps. He asked very politely: "May I speak to the minister of defence, Sharon?" The official at the desk was equally courteous: "I am sorry, sir, but Mr. Sharon is no longer the minister of defence." But the persistent caller phoned again, only to pose the same question and get the same answer. After the fourth call, the defence ministry official lost his temper: "I have told you repeatedly, Sharon is no longer with us!" To which the citizen retorted: "I know, but I just love to hear it again and again."

This story doesn't necessarily reflect the public mood in Israel today, nor, for that matter, majority opinion back in 1983. The elite stratum detests Sharon, and are absolutely contemptuous of Benjamin Netanyahu, but the pro-Likud section of the public is quite conservative and (from the prime minister's point of view) stable. Even the terrible and ridiculous fiasco in Jordan on Sept. 25, and its even worse aftermath, has not changed the balance of power inside Israel. Not drastically, not conspicuously, perhaps even not at all. This is quite a mystery for impartial observers, but impartial people do not reside in the state of Israel. One is either

a great admirer of Netanyahu and his gang, or a sworn enemy of them. The ground in between is getting increasingly thinner.

Most educated Israelis are fully aware of the indisputable fact that Netanyahu has brought shame and international condemnation upon our country. Unfortunately, this class of people did not vote for Netanyahu any way. True enough, five per cent of the voters can swing to the other side and vote Bibi out of office, but the general elections are not due until the year 2000. Ousting Netanyahu can be a very complicated business, unless the Americans begin to destabilise him. What they did for criminal reasons in Chile in 1973 would be regarded by any sane person as a great service to mankind in Israel in 1997.

Just a few weeks ago I described Netanyahu as "remote from reality to the point of mental illness." Readers deserve an apology for such an understatement. The woefully botched operation in Amman and the diplomatic ruptures with Jordan and Canada have simply followed other great disasters, such as the failed strike of the Flotilla 13 commando unit in Lebanon. Many anti-Netanyahu rumours stem now from the U.S. State Department and even the White House. Very reliable sources have informed MEI that the devastatingly damaging piece of information that Netanyahu had ignored a Hamas offer for a 10-year ceasefire was leaked to

CNN by President Clinton himself.

It is obvious that Clinton is completely fed up with the Likud government, but he has not managed to achieve anything as far as the Israeli-Palestinian peace process is concerned. Since the now almost nostalgic ceremony which celebrated the peace agreement between Israel and Jordan in 1994, the U.S. has failed dismally in the Middle East. Netanyahu has turned Israel, after Rabin and Peres made it popular again, into a pariah, a collective outcast. This is his soft underbelly, since most Israelis seek a good life and total security and realise that only the Americans can guarantee this. Clinton has missed some golden opportunities to exert real pressure and squeeze Bibi where it hurts.

The U.N. arena is also important, but less crucial for Netanyahu. Since the General Assembly resolution in 1975 equating Zionism with racism, self-pity and self-righteousness have thrived and prospered tremendously. At least three generations of Israelis have been brought up to believe that the U.N. is nothing but a conspiracy of thugs opposed to the Jewish people in general and Israel in particular. This peculiar sentiment is very deeply entrenched, even among educated Labour and Meretz voters. The 1975 resolution might have been ideologically sound, but its effect here was very negative. It enhanced feelings of xenophobia and isolation. The September 1993

Israeli-Palestinian accord helped to dispel, at least temporarily, the clearly unhelpful and even dangerous state of mind of the public, but Netanyahu has succeeded in reversing this healthy process.

It has been reported that several Arab and Muslim countries threatened to challenge Israel's credentials for the next General Assembly. Some European countries, and even Canada, could follow suit, or at least refrain from rescuing Israel this time round. On Oct. 5, the extremely glib Labour leader, Ehud Barak, offered to harness his international connections in order to save the prime minister from the consequences of his act of madness in Jordan. Barak is a novice in the international arena, and his presumption is both arrogant and silly.

"Our leader is going to squander every opportunity to unseat Netanyahu and so he is completely useless to us," a Labour MK told MEI. Even many Jerusalem taxi drivers, most of them notorious Likudniks, now express regret for voting against Shimon Peres in May 1996. The election slogan "Bibi is good for the Jews" has turned into a sick joke. Many Arabs, who have always wanted Israel to lose its international credibility, can now scarcely contain their amusement. The spectacular own goals scored by the reckless Netanyahu leave the region yearning for sanity, even more than for justice.

Middle East International

Human Rights File

'Electing minority representatives: Why and how'

By Waleed M. Sadi

OF COURSE the Jordanian Constitution says nothing about electing parliamentary representatives for any ethnic or religious group in the country. This constitutional silence deserves a moment of reflection. Yet we have managed to improvise an electoral system that purports to offer all major minority groups in the Kingdom a guaranteed representation in the Parliament. Before addressing the legality of this improvisation and determining whether this formula corresponds faithfully with the Constitution and our international treaty obligations, it is appropriate to take this criterion to task on the basis it is being pursued and carried out.

If we feel that Jordanian Christians or Circassians, or even Armenians are entitled to have special parliamentary seats to speak on their behalf why then are Muslims and Arabs allowed, not only to take part in the election of these minority representatives, but also determine the result? I suggest that if we wish to continue on this path of assured minority representation only voters from these groups should be allowed to elect their representatives. Otherwise the entire exercise becomes a big farce and a sham that calls for a speedy rectification. Even when national elections were conducted in the past based on one-person, multi-votes basis, the damage to minority representation was identical. The one-person, one-vote criterion for the upcoming elections would not stop cross religious and ethnic lines voting as it is more than conceivable that a Jordanian Arab Muslim would cast his or her vote for a Christian or Circassian and end up determining who represents the affected minority group instead of having this determination made by the minority group itself. But if we were to decide to allow each minority group to choose alone its own representatives, then we would have to reclassify Jordanians on the basis of not only religion but also along ethnic lines. It would be easy to determine who is and who is not a Christian but to decide who is, for example, a Circassian would be problematic since there is a great deal of inter-marriage going on between Arabs and Circassians.

Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali has promised the country a thoroughly reformed election legislation to govern all future elections. The first sign of the new model is the projected redrawing of electoral districts to assure one seat for each and every district. Of course, the prime minister could have applied this improved districting formula for the November 4 elections by adopting a temporary law. Dr. Majali chose not to do so probably because he wanted to articulate all the other complimentary features of the new election law before he ventures into its bits and pieces.

This is therefore an occasion to call on the prime minister to take time before all the details of his projected election law are drawn up to reflect on the national constitutional requirements as well as on our treaty commitments, especially the ones that fall under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Surely the government knows very well that treaties supersede national laws whenever there is a conflict between them. That is why the drafters of the new election law should familiarise themselves with the international jurisprudence on fair and free elections. Otherwise the country risks finding itself in violation of international law.

I suggest that the entire issue of minority representation undergo a fresh review to ascertain its legality. If it is determined that peculiar extenuating circumstances justify an affirmative minority representation, then we need to see how best we can translate this into reality in a coherent and sane manner. For this purpose the prime minister may wish to draw on the expertise of knowledgeable Jordanians including those who developed an area of expertise in international human rights law. In any case I do not see any sense in electing parliamentarians who presumably represent certain Jordanian minority groups by voters who have nothing to do with these minorities.

LETTERS

Relying on ourselves, not on aid

To the Editor:

LAST MONTH, Fahed Fanek wrote a long article dismissing any signs of recession, and blaming the private sector for being pessimistic and constantly complaining about the Jordanian economy. Now, Dr. Fanek (Jordan Times, Oct. 19, 1997) is saying Jordan has 27 per cent unemployment, and 25 per cent of families live below the poverty line. Dr. Fanek goes on to ask for more U.S. aid for Jordan, in exchange for Jordan's signing the peace treaty with Israel.

My comments are as follows: First, Jordan did not sign the peace treaty to get money, but out of conviction that the future lies in a peaceful Middle East, which may not guarantee prosperity, but will make it a lot easier to build wealth and raise the standard of living. Secondly, if taken on a per capita basis, Jordan is receiving more aid than Egypt. Thirdly, learning to live on foreign aid is not only self-destructive, but can cause severe inflation and currency devaluation, as any economist should know. Lastly, the U.S. aid to Jordan is not designed to sustain the economy, but rather to help Jordan build infrastructure, reengineer its bureaucratic system, and privatise its state assets and companies, namely the energy, communications and transportation sectors.

Additional U.S. aid may be received in other forms, such as last week's granting of Irbid's Al Hassan Industrial City the status of qualified investment zone (QIZ).

At this point, our main goal should not be receiving additional foreign aid, but rather focusing our efforts on becoming a self-sustained economy, raising the standard of living, and lowering unemployment without having to constantly rely on foreign aid.

Marwan M. Attalla,
P.O. Box 1838,
Amman 11118.



PRO-SETTLEMENT: Two Israeli soldiers in uniform join hundreds of Jewish settlers and right-wing supporters of the Jewish settlements as they wave flags on Sunday in the Ibrahimi Mosque vicinity in Hebron in a celebration marking the Jewish holiday of Succoth. Thousands of Jews travelled to Hebron to show their support for the Jewish settlements movement as U.S. special envoy Dennis Ross was meeting Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to discuss the proposed 'time out' on Israel's settlement construction (Reuters photo)

Palestinian surgeon highlights importance of early treatment of ambiguous genitalia cases

By Hind-Lara Mango
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Ambiguous genitalia in babies is a source of great concern to parents who do not know if they have a baby boy or girl. But even more important is the social pressure exerted on the child with this condition.

According to Tayseer Milhem, a specialist in male pseudo-hermaphroditism from the Princess Alia Hospital in Hebron, Palestine, ambiguous genitalia is "a serious and strange phenomenon, and when a baby is born with ambiguous genitalia, it is not clear whether the child is a male or female."

Male pseudo-hermaphroditism "means that babies have unilateral or bilateral undescending testes, in addition to a vagina," Dr. Milhem explained, adding that female pseudo-hermaphroditism means "the child has a uterus, fallopian tubes, ovaries, and a vagina, which can be detected by ultrasound."

He told the Jordan Times that because the sex of the baby is not clear, parents bestow unisex names on these children. One such case was when a couple

named their "daughter" Hikmat, because it could be applied to both sexes.

Even though Hikmat was registered as a girl, "the child showed clear male features and tendencies," Dr. Milhem said. He elaborated that when Hikmat was six years old, the child was put in a boy's school. However, when the administration found out that Hikmat was officially registered as a girl, they refused to have the child as a student.

The only option left for Hikmat was to go to a girl's school, which the child refused to do. This resulted in the child staying at home for one year.

"This was a lucky case," Dr. Milhem said, as many of these children with ambiguous genitalia reach the age of 21 without having received a formal education because of their condition.

Since 1990, Dr. Milhem has seen and researched 12 cases of male pseudo-hermaphroditism. This number, he remarked, is considered to be quite high and includes all age ranges.

Three of his patients, he disclosed, were between two and three years old, while the remaining nine patients ranged between six

and seven years of age.

"But the younger the child is operated on the better the results," Dr. Milhem said, noting that "the ideal age for this operation is one and a half years, as the child will have more of a chance of becoming a fertile male."

However, the surgeon said it is not easy for the parents to admit that their child has ambiguous genitalia. He said he feels ashamed that his son exhibits female tendencies and physical features.

This is the reason, he said, that he has operated on patients as old as 21 years. In this instance, there is a high risk that the male will be infertile, Dr. Milhem stated.

A child's sex is determined by tests undertaken by a paediatric endocrinologist, then the child is referred to a specialist. In the event the baby is diagnosed with male pseudo-hermaphroditism, he is given the hormone testosterone and then is subject to an operation. In the surgery, external genitalia is corrected and reconstructed.

Dr. Milhem commented that the operation for male pseudo-hermaphroditism is quite difficult, since it involves great blood loss,

particularly when the vagina is removed. Another option is to lift the vagina beyond the urethra, which the surgeon said he believed is just as effective as the first option and is more advisable.

There are many reasons for ambiguous genitalia, Dr. Milhem stated. One cause is related to the low level of testosterone, and "to testicular differentiation and function."

Dr. Milhem did not rule out heredity as a factor in ambiguous genitalia, as one of his patients came from the same village in Hebron and two from Bethlehem.

But whatever the cause, a great deal of psychological trauma is involved for both the child and the parents.

"Most parents feel ashamed, but when they realise that such cases can be effectively treated, it is amazing to see the transformation in their lives and the life of their child," he said.

Dr. Milhem presented his findings at the 25th Conference of the Jordanian Surgical Society and the Fifth Jordanian-German Medical Conference, which concluded in Jordan last week.

Egyptian foreign minister warns of arms race after Israel-Turkey missile scheme

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt on Sunday warned that plans by Israel and Turkey to co-build a long-range air-to-surface missile would trigger an arms race in the region.

"These are not positive changes and will absolutely trigger an arms race and create new tensions in the region," Foreign Minister

Amr Musa told reporters who questioned him about Turkish-Israeli missile schemes.

"Turkey is a brother state and a friend and is capable of reconsidering this policy," Mr. Musa said.

Israeli chief of staff, General Amnon Shahak, said in Ankara last Monday that Israel and Turkey had

decided to build an air-to-surface missile called "Pop-eye" which would be used by the Turkish air force. He did not give further details.

Mr. Musa criticised the U.S. role in this joint venture.

"There are international and U.S. steps [which could be taken] to halt world production of long-range mis-

siles but exceptions exist and this makes everyone wonder about such restrictions in the first place," Mr. Musa said. Israel and Turkey warmed relations last year and signed pacts of military cooperation which triggered a wave of concern from Arab countries.

Tarawneh expects peace process back on track soon as result of U.S. efforts

(Continued from page 1)

so as to help the Palestinian negotiating position, the minister added.

It was in the same vein that King Hussein decided not to adopt any drastic moves following an attempt by two Israeli agents to assassinate Hamas leader Khaled Misha'al in Amman.

That appeared to be a reference to calls for Jordan to sever diplomatic ties with Israel following the incident last month.

Any "emotional" move by Jordan in retaliation for the assassination attempt, said Dr. Tarawneh, "would have been devastating for prospects in the Israeli-Palestinian track of negotiations."

Throughout the episode, the Jordanian priority was

to ensure that the peace process does not suffer as a result of any Jordanian action and that was why King Hussein accepted an assurance and pledge by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that Israel would not carry out any such action on Jordanian soil.

The pledge was coupled with the release of Hamas leader Sheikh Ahmad Yassin and up to 60 Jordanian and Palestinian detainees from Israeli jails. Simultaneously, Jordan freed the two Israeli agents who tried to murder Mr. Misha'al.

King Hussein "ensured that the Palestinians got the most" out of the Jordanian-Israeli compromise, said Dr. Tarawneh.

The minister, noting that the Arab League had left it

to "sovereign" decisions whether to attend the MENA conference in Doha, said Jordan would send a ministerial level delegation to the forum, the fourth of its kind to be held since the launch of the Middle East peace process in 1991.

Several Arab countries oppose the conference saying Israel's participation in the forum will be a reward for the Jewish state at a time it is following a rejectionist policy in its peace talks and is refusing to implement agreements it has signed with the Palestinians.

The composition of the Jordanian delegation to the meeting is expected to be formalised by the Cabinet later this month, said Dr. Tarawneh.

"Jordan respects the decision of those [Arab coun-

tries not to attend the meeting] as much as we expect them to respect our decision to attend," he said.

At the same time, Jordan hopes to "see as much Arab participation as possible" in the conference because there is a dire need for a "unified Arab position" towards increased Arab economic integration, which could be served by the meeting.

The conference, Dr. Tarawneh said, is of a broad international scope and will be attended by the major economic powers of the world and, as such, it could be an opportunity to develop Arab economic cooperation with the international community.

Dr. Tarawneh said preparations of Jordan's parliamentary elections on Nov. 4 were going ahead without

Hamas spiritual leader meets Palestinian legislators

Sheikh Yassin calls for release of followers held in Palestinian jails

GAZA CITY (AFP) — Hamas spiritual leader, Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, met with members of the elected Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) Sunday and called for the release of his followers held in Palestinian jails.

Sheikh Yassin, who was freed from an Israeli jail on Oct. 1 after eight years in prison but has never renounced Hamas' goal of destroying Israel, also reaffirmed his determination to pursue resistance against the Jewish state "until the end of occupation and oppression."

"As long as there is occupation, we will fight it," said Sheikh Yassin, whose movement has killed scores of Israelis in suicide bombings since peace agreements were signed in 1993 between the PLO and Israel.

Sheikh Yassin was invited to address the human rights committee of the PLC at its Gaza City offices and appealed to the panel to help obtain the release of

some 70 Hamas members arrested by Palestinian police following a spate of Jerusalem bombings in July and September.

"These prisoners must be released. Why are they in prison with no evidence against them?" Sheikh Yassin said, noting that the activists had launched a hunger strike to obtain their freedom.

"A man is innocent until proven guilty, so why should he remain in jail when he has not been convicted?" he asked. He also called for the reopening of 16 Hamas social welfare institutions closed late last month by the Palestinian National Authority (PNA).

PLC member Kamal Shira'i said the sheikh also discussed relations between the PNA and Hamas, whose attacks on Israel have seriously undermined PNA's strategy of trying to achieve a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza through negotiations.

"Sheikh Yassin asked us to work for the release of

the prisoners and to respect human rights and in turn said Hamas does not intend to embarrass the Palestinian [National] Authority," he said in a veiled reference to a possible Hamas pledge to refrain from attacks on Israeli civilians.

Going into the meeting, Sheikh Yassin lashed out at Israel and the U.S. for pressuring the PNA to crack down on Hamas as the main precondition for pursuing the peace process.

"We will not yield to these American and Israeli pressures," he said, pledging to maintain Palestinian unity "in face of Israeli and American conspiracies to sow disunity and fighting among us."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu ordered Sheikh Yassin's release as part of a deal to obtain the freedom of two Israeli agents captured in Jordan last month while trying to assassinate another Hamas official.

Sheikh Yassin's release contradicted Mr.

Netanyahu's central policy of insisting that Hamas be crushed as a condition for continuing the peace process and undermined Arafat's own belated campaign against Islamists.

Since Sheikh Yassin returned to Gaza, there have been no arrests by Palestinian police of Hamas activists, prompting Israel to reiterate its stand that there will be no progress in U.S.-mediated peace talks with the Palestinians until the crackdown on Islamists resumes.

Sheikh Yassin for his part has offered to halt suicide bombings against Israeli civilians if Israel ends its occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and removes Jewish settlers from occupied territories.

But he has made clear that Hamas will not halt its resistance to Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands, including territory which now makes up the state of Israel.

Syria hails Arab investors' parley 'retort' to Qatar

DAMASCUS (AFP) — Syria on Sunday called the Beirut Arab Investors Conference the appropriate "retort" to next month's economic conference in Doha which several Arab states are boycotting over Israel's participation.

The seventh Arab Investors Conference in Beirut "is of exceptional significance because... it is a retort to all those who want Arab cooperation with Israel" at the Nov. 16-18 Middle East economic conference in Doha, the government newspaper Tishreen said.

The newspaper welcomed the "large participation" by Arab businessmen in Beirut which shows "their desire for inter-Arab cooperation and their rejection of suspect invitations aimed at putting Arab economies at the service of others," it said, referring to the Doha conference.

Tishreen said the 600 Arab businessmen at the investors conference are "dissatisfied with the level of Arab investment in Arab countries which is no more than \$2 billion while Arab money invested elsewhere is up to \$800 billion."

"Syria was one of the first to call for the creation of an Arab common market and considers the Arab

Investors' Conference in Beirut a necessary effort to achieve complementary economies" among Arab states, it said.

Syria and Lebanon have called on other Arab countries not to attend the Doha conference, saying Israel must make more progress in negotiations. The November regional conference brings together officials and businessmen from the Arab World, Israel and their main economic partners, notably the United States, Europe and Japan.

At the opening session Saturday of the Beirut conference, Lebanese President Elias Hrawi told Qatar's ambassador to Lebanon, Mohammad Al Noaimi, to "shut up and sit down."

Mr. Noaimi had been trying to criticise a speech by Syrian Prime Minister Mahmoud Zu'bi which was critical of the Doha conference.

The Arab Investors' Conference, which runs until Monday, is designed to boost investment between Arab nations, discuss problems hindering inter-Arab investment and encourage economic, financial and stock exchange cooperation.

Floods kill 13 in Israel, West Bank

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — The bodies of a 7-year-old bedouin shepherdess and an Israeli man were discovered Sunday in the Negev desert after the first heavy rains of the season caused flash flooding.

Saturday's torrential storms, which caused flooding across southern Israel and in the West Bank, has so far killed 13 people, including six who died when their van skidded on wet roads and smashed head-on into a truck. The crash victims were reportedly five Romanian workers and their bedouin driver.

Hundreds of Israeli troops and bedouins searched through flowing waters and thick mud Sunday for two other bedouin girls who were still missing.

In Jerusalem, police called off the search for an Arab boy who reportedly fell into a drainage canal Saturday after police divers failed to find any signs of him. The report came from another child and police

spokeswoman Mihal Tsimberg said no one had reported a child missing.

Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat appealed for international help and ordered a committee to evaluate the losses in the Palestinian National Authority-controlled city of Jericho, where storms destroyed 74 homes, mostly in refugee camps, and caused several million dollars worth of damage.

In Israel's southern resort town of Eilat, roads leading out of the city were closed Sunday because of flooding. The airport was closed overnight but reopened Sunday afternoon.

Electricity was still out in some areas of Beersheva, the largest town in the Negev.

The storms came as Israelis celebrated the eight-day Sukkot festival, with many of them camping and hiking in nature reserves and national parks. Thousands cut short their vacations and returned home.

Undersea cable to link Israel, Cyprus and Italy

TEL AVIV (R) — A consortium of Israeli and foreign companies have agreed to lay an \$80 million undersea telecommunications cable between Israel, Cyprus and Italy.

Bezeq Israel Telecom Bezeq said on Sunday.

Bezeq Managing Director Ami Arel said in a statement that the new cable would incorporate fibre optic wires to carry high-speed data communications, leased lines, Internet and video in addition to regular voice communications.

Mr. Arel said the new cable was part of Bezeq's effort to compete in Israel's increasingly competitive telecommunications market. In July, the government authorised two companies to compete with Bezeq in international calling and says it will open some segments of basic telephone services to competition by 1999.

The new cable will run under the Mediterranean to Cyprus and Sicily and link Israel to the Far East, the United States, South Amer-

ica and Europe.

Bezeq did not say when the cable would be completed and a spokesman was unavailable for comment.

Bezeq, Israel's main telecommunications company, has a 21.5 per cent stake in the consortium building the cable, Telecom Italia SPA TIT.MI18.25 per cent and the Cyprus Telecommunications Authority (CYTA) 7.25 per cent.

Among the other Israeli partners are Clalcom (18.25 per cent), Globescom (8.25 per cent) and AUREC (8.25 per cent). Clalcom is a partner in the Barak consortium and Globescom and AUREC are partners in Golden Lines Group. The two Consortia are competing with Bezeq in international dialling.

Bezeq also said that it was naming its existing Mediterranean undersea cable MED-1 after Gideon Lev, a former communications ministry director-general who initiated the project.

Riyadh develops gas to fuel industrialisation

Saudi Arabia pledges to improve investment climate

YANBU, Saudi Arabia (AFP) — Finance and Economy Minister Ibrahim Al Assaf pledged here Sunday to improve the investment climate in Saudi Arabia as it seeks funds for infrastructure projects.

Saudi Arabia is also moving ahead with privatisation and expects to privatise its telecommunications at the beginning of next year.

"We are hopeful for early 1998," he told delegates at a gas conference.

"We are intent and determined to make it (the climate) even more conducive to investors, both domestically and internationally, and to level the playing field for investment," he said.

"We are looking into our laws and regulations" under a mandate from King Fahd, Mr. Assaf said.

The finance minister said the government was considering plans "to expedite and streamline" customs and to join conventions on protection of investments and copyright.

After the review, "I am confident that the tax law will compare favourably with many other countries," he said.

On privatisation, Mr. Assaf acknowledged that "some doubt our intentions, some say they are slowing because of the improvement in the fiscal situation," with the deficit having dropped to three per cent of GDP (gross domestic product).

But he pointed to "serious work underway to look into new areas where the private sector could play a major role," pointing to plans to privatise the telecom sector and Saudi Arabian Airlines.

A decision on telecoms will be "in the near future," he said. "It's typical of our work that we do not announce anything until such investments are ready to be put to the public."

Industry and Electricity

Minister Hisham Yamani said Saturday that the kingdom was planning a massive expansion of its power generating sector, from 20 megawatts to 70 megawatts over the next 25 years.

To find the estimated \$117 billion of investments needed for this expansion, the electricity sector would be "propelled on its own toward privatisation," he told some 400 delegates at the conference sponsored by Italy's state energy company ENI.

Turning to the state of the economy, Mr. Assaf said that in 1996 growth was 8.6 per cent "in nominal terms," similar to rates after the previous four years after the huge drain on the economy of the 1991 Gulf War.

The fiscal deficit was over 11 per cent of GDP after Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait, he said.

Meanwhile, a key cabinet minister said Sunday Saudi Arabia has embarked on a major gas development programme that will fuel future industrial growth.

"We are now moving into a new phase of gas development with great significance," Oil Minister Ali Bin Ibrahim Al Nuaimi told the conference attended by international and private Saudi firms.

"Perhaps oil is the first thing associated with Saudi Arabia by the outside world, but to us gas is equally essential to our continued economic growth," Mr. Nuaimi said.

Saudi Arabia is the world's largest oil producer and exporter and a major power in the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

State oil firm Saudi Aramco was now engaged in an effort to add seven trillion cubic feet of gas a year to its current reserves of 204 trillion cubic feet, the world's fourth largest, Mr. Nuaimi said.

New exploration activity and a multi-billion dollar

expansion of its domestic gas supply network was being implemented to keep pace with rising electricity and fuel feedstock demand from petrochemical firms.

Gas demand was expected to grow by at least eight per cent a year, which would boost local gas requirements to some seven billion cubic feet a day in 10 years' time.

"We view the need for commercially sound hydrocarbon supplies, both for serving our industrial base and for meeting rising demand from public utilities, as putting natural gas squarely at the forefront of our future," Mr. Nuaimi said in his conference address.

The race to develop gas in the conservative, oil-rich kingdom has raised hopes among international firms of not only contract work, but also a stake in the prolific Saudi gas reserves, a right denied since nationalisation of the oil and gas industry in Saudi Arabia began in the 1970s.

But Mr. Nuaimi ruled out a direct role for foreign firms in the country's "upstream" gasfields, saying that this would remain the preserve of Saudi Aramco.

"At the upstream level, which is mainly exploration and production, involvement of international companies is not needed," Mr. Nuaimi told delegates.

Work from drilling wells to laying pipelines was open to foreign investors as was the downstream petrochemical sector.

Mr. Nuaimi also appeared to have denied the hopes of foreign firms attending the conference that Aramco would consider gas export projects in the form of pipeline projects and liquefied natural gas (LNG) plants.

"For the foreseeable future, we have no plans to export gas while demand continues to rise and we pursue domestic development," he said.



JEDCO, UNCTAD and UNDP organise seminar on computerising customs methods

A lecturer explains procedures during a seminar on computerising customs methods using the ESICUDA system to simplify customs transactions and measures through decentralisation processes. The seminar, which started Sunday, is organised by the Jordan Exports Development and Commercial Centres Corporation (JEDCO) in cooperation with the Customs Department and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (Petra photo)

GCC defers decision on unified tariff

DOHA (R) — Arab Gulf states failed Saturday to agree on a unified tariff accord which has eluded them for years, an official communiqué said.

"The ministers decided to defer the matter until a further study was made by the GCC secretariat in Riyadh," said the communiqué after the 46th meeting of the Gulf Cooperation Council finance ministers in the Qatari capital.

"Differences persist on a very tiny fraction of the product list whose value may not be more than three per cent of the total value of GCC imports, but it's vital," said an

official attending the day-long meeting along with the ministers.

The GCC states — Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Oman and Kuwait — have classified more than 95 per cent of over 1,200 products they import in bulk into three categories — exempt, taxable and special taxable — for customs levy purposes.

But differences over the classification of some products, like steel and petrochemicals, have blocked an agreement. An official said some states fear these nascent industries might be swamped by

foreign competition if duties were lowered on these items.

Customs tariffs in the GCC states range from four per cent in the UAE to 20 per cent in Bahrain. The Saudis also levy 20 per cent duty on certain items to protect their local industry.

A GCC summit in December agreed to complete classification before the next summit in Kuwait in December this year.

The European Union (EU), the GCC's main trade partner, has said it will sign a free trade accord with the Arab Gulf states only after they had reached a unified tariff accord.

Arab commerce ministers end talks

DOHA (AFP) — The Commerce ministers of six Arab Gulf states have ended talks in Doha, Qatar, after preparing proposals for their leaders to unify corporate laws and facilitate trade among their countries.

The ministers from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, which are seeking to merge their economies, also recommended reducing the level of national participation in the added value of joint ventures with foreigners in a bid to remove a main obstacle in the movement of goods among them.

"The ministers adopted several recommendations to be put

forward to the GCC summit to be held in Kuwait in December," said Qatari economy and commerce minister, Sheikh Mohammed bin Khalifa Al Thani.

He said the meeting covered a proposed draft law that would bridge the gap in corporate laws between members and pave the way for linking their stock markets.

The draft law has been under discussion for several years as some members have expressed reservations on the amendments in their corporate laws.

Experts said a common corporate law would open the door for an agreement to link stock

markets and allow citizens from the 16-year-old defence, political and economic alliance to trade in shares in all member states. The six members are planning to link their stock exchanges as part of their 1983 economic pact which calls for the creation of a common Gulf market.

The GCC commerce ministers from Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) also recommended easing terms on national industries by cutting the level of local contribution to the added value in foreign projects to 30 from 40 per cent, the Qatari minister said.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR MONDAY, OCTOBER 20, 1997
By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ARIES:

(March 21 to April 19) This is the beginning of a very intense three-day period. Focus on your home and family right now. If you haven't already formed a solid partnership at work, do it now. It could mean a lot to your career and a big increase in your income.

TAURUS:

(April 20 to May 20) Emphasis is on education. How about learning something you can use on the job? You're just about to complete a big project. Apply what you know, plus what you're learning. Go from doing everything yourself to having a partner help. It'll be worth the effort.

GEMINI:

(May 21 to June 21) You need to be careful. Finish up old things before you start new ones. In your personal relationships, it looks like there's a conversation that needs to take place early. Have it before you go to work. If necessary, make a commitment.

CANCER:

(June 22 to July 22) Today you need to be patient. Keep your own counsel. Talk matters over inside your own head, with nobody else but yourself. Don't shout out loud, no matter how frustrated you get, or you'll give the secret away!

LEO:

(July 23 to August 22) You're under some sort of pressure, from a private source. To achieve the peace of mind you so richly deserve, apply information you've recently acquired. If it works, you'll feel much better about yourself. If you avoid using what you've learned, the situation could actually get worse. Hence, the choice is obvious.

VIRGO:

(August 23 to September 22) A friend is under quite a bit of pressure today. You can be helpful, but you can't make the choice. It looks like the situation turns out for the best. Advise your friend not to worry. Don't you worry about a problem you have at home, either. Love will prevail, even if there's not enough money.

LIBRA:

(September 23 to October 23) You're up against a predicament that needs your attention. If you can move quickly, you could get a fabulous career opportunity. If you're too tired, you might have to let it go by. Don't give up. It may be easier than you think.

SCORPIO:

(October 24 to November 21) You're getting luckier, approaching magnificent. So make a bold move. Go ahead and put money down on that trip to the Bahamas. You don't have to decide who you're going to take along, yet. You know you'll want a companion. If you don't find one here, you'll find one there.

SAGITTARIUS:

(November 22 to December 21) The focus is on your money and the money you share with other people. You may feel like you don't have quite enough to go around. You won't be able to get out of your responsibilities, but you can change them around a little. Make them more fun.

CAPRICORN:

(December 22 to January 19) You're busily performing three or four tasks at the same time. You'll have a whole team of people helping later in the week. The bad news is that the project isn't organised yet. That's your job for today. Figure out what needs to be done and start telling people to do it.

AQUARIUS:

(January 20 to February 19) There is a conflict. Part of you wants desperately to play while the other insists on working. That's because you're in love. The morning is your best time for romance. So see if you can get the morning off and work late this evening. It's doubtful, but you could ask.

PISCES:

(February 19 to March 20) You may be feeling a little short of money. You'll be doing better financially soon. Meanwhile, you're falling in love! It will happen slowly at first, but by the end of the week, you could be deliriously happy. Take care of practical matters. You don't want to deal with them later.

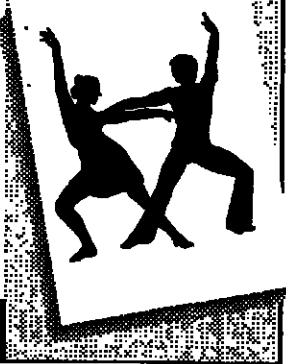
Birthstone of October: Opal — Tourmaline

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Then, come & join us at the Jazz rock dance courses at the French Cultural Centre. Professional teacher, very dynamic method, great atmosphere. Twice a week - duration : 8 weeks. Fees : 52,500 JD.

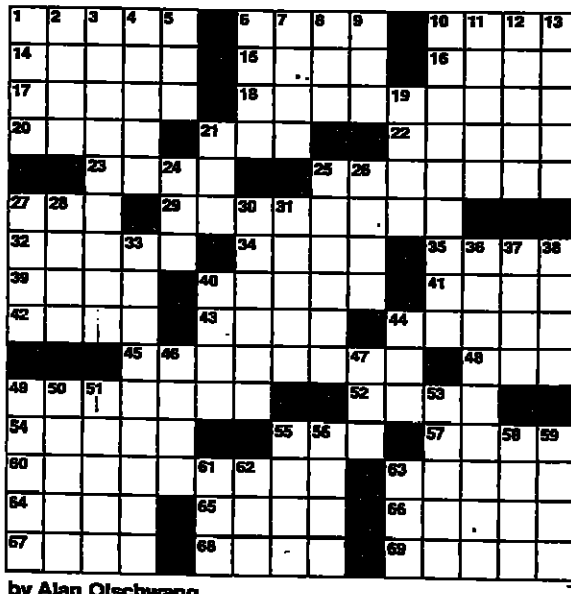
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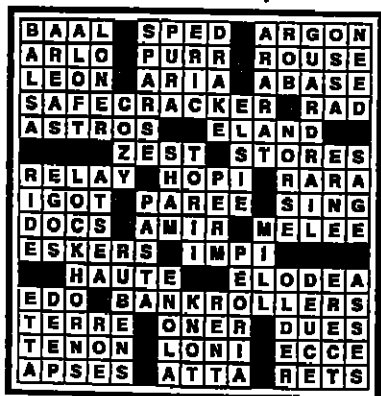
For more information, please contact F.C.C. Tel. 637 009 - 636 445 - 612 658, Jebel Weibdeh - Amman

THE Daily Crossword

- ACROSS
1 Cheap jewelry
6 Niche
10 Down for the night
14 River frolicker
15 Single
16 Bill of —
17 Sacred book of Islam
18 Full of literary tidbits
20 Type of poem
21 Early bird?
22 Got up earlier
23 Fireside event
25 Overhauled
27 River island
29 Emoluments
32 Helteric
34 Italian noble family
35 Nora's pet
36 Coarse file
40 Ancient language
41 News piece
42 Against
43 Goes astray
44 Revere
45 Implied
48 Score a point in wrestling
49 University board members
54 Happening
55 Corrida cheer
57 Small container
60 Marceau forte
63 Type of scout
64 Adams or Magnus
65 King of comedy
66 "— Frome"
67 Ogle
68 Await action
69 Type of rocket



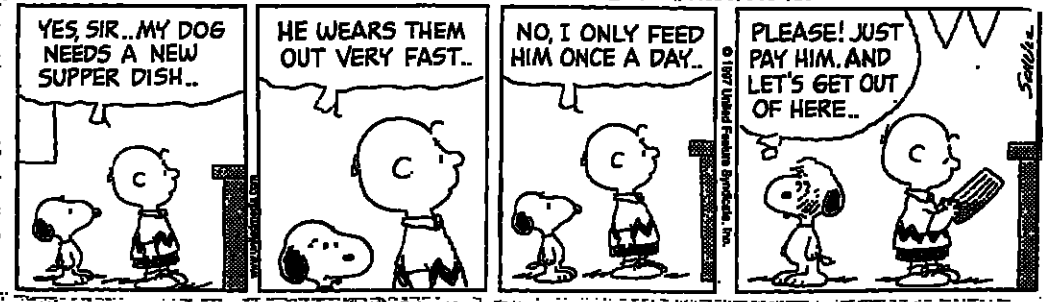
by Alan Olschwang



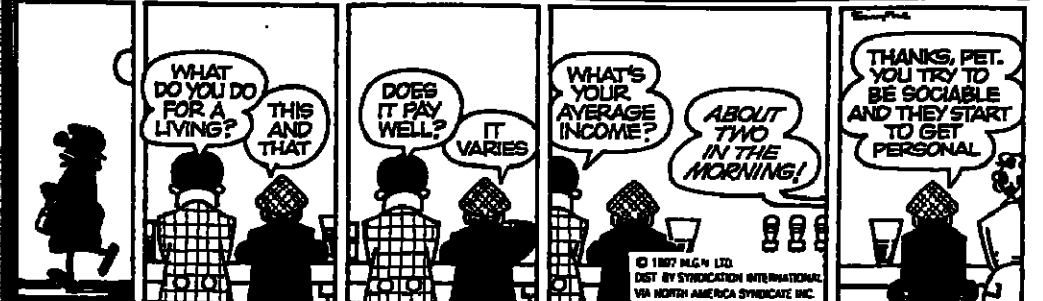
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- DOWN
2 At the summit
3 Most austere
4 Instruct
5 Sea eagle
6 Steel mill byproduct
7 Pine
8 Dollar bill
9 Gumshoe, briefly
10 Spoken of earlier
11 Use
12 Expanse
13 Removed
18 1482, e.g.
21 Letter from Greece
24 Pop the question
25 Cheval, e.g.
26 Legal claim
27 Taj Mahal site
28 Tehran's place
30 Comes to understand
31 Houston pro
33 Traffic point
36 Traffic controller
37 Actress Garr
38 The last word
40 Time before Easter
44 Pother
46 Upon
47 Cote d'Ivoire
49 Chase away
50 Escape capture
51 Bottle being
53 Egg-shaped
55 Middle Eastern sultanate
56 Extend credit
58 Wing-shaped
59 Successor
61 Atlas entry
62 — de France
63 Always, in poetry

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n' Jeff



THE BETTER HALF



"Experts say the human body is 80% water. I guess the other 20% is stress."

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles. One letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

USSEO

SYNIO

RODAFE

MERCOH

Answer here: IT

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Mike Argente

Just practicing our casual, officer

RESTRICTED AREA

WHY THE GAME WARDEN DIDN'T BELIEVE HIS STORY.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer: A HORSE OF PLENTY

Yesterday's Jumbles: DOWNY BLANK ZITHER PSYCHE
Answer: What the trumpet's rich sounds gave the musician — A HORN OF PLENTY

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

Banker, businessman express views about interest rates on deposits, loans

**** THE INTEREST** rates on loans and other credit facilities depend on many factors such as the cost of deposits, the availability of liquidity and the borrower's financial position, Jordan Gulf Bank General Manager Fayez Abul Enein said this week. Answering a question on why banks did not lower interest rates on loans and credit advances following a drop in interest rates on certificates of deposit issued by the Central Bank, Mr. Abul Enein gave another two reasons.

He mentioned the administrative cost factor or the high/low operational costs of a bank and the availability of other earnings from sources other than lending as the two additional elements that influence the interest rate level. He said that by taking into consideration that operational costs of the banks are rising and that other sources of earnings are few, banks are obliged to maintain a wide margin between the costs of deposits and the lending interest rates.

"It should be pointed out here that prices of other banking services in Jordan (such as various commissions) are much lower than in neighbouring and other countries," Mr. Abul Enein indicated. He

said that although interest rates are among the factors that influence investment, its importance should be overemphasised because "the interest rates in the Kingdom are not the highest in the region and they should not be the key on which the efficiency of measures encouraging investment depend."

Responding to the same question, Talal Halawani said that repeated talk about the dinar exchange rate creates suspicion and doubt about the strength of the Jordanian dinar drives away people from using it as strategic investment tool.

Mr. Halawani, chairman and general manager of Maltrans Shipping Agency, said the reduction of a point or less in the interest on certificates of deposit is not a core element to encourage commercial banks to lower lending interest. He explained that investment in certificates of deposit provides banks with high yield and relieves them from the risk element. Equally, he said, investors do not find it feasible to borrow at high cost and prefer to deposit their savings in cash deposits at banks at a guaranteed and high interest (Al Ra'i).

Jordanian-Swiss committee finances rural programmes

AMMAN (Petra) — Swiss ambassador to Jordan, Gian Federico Pedotti, and Finance Minister Suleiman Hafez Sunday signed an agreement under which the joint Jordanian-Swiss Committee disbursed JD199,000 to the Near East Institution for Financing Rural Communities which carries out development programmes in the Kingdom.

The money is part of an amount that Switzerland gave to Jordan in the past when Bern transformed the Kingdom's debts into a grant.

The grant will now benefit the underprivileged communities of Jordan through financing a number of income-generating projects



Minister Suleiman Hafez and the Swiss ambassador sign the agreement Sunday (Petra photo)

to Switzerland. The \$27 million amount, in Jordanian currency, was used by the joint committee to finance local projects

Some of the grant (former debt) was used so far to finance building the hospital in Maadid through the Ministry of Health as well as vocational training centres and the restoration of parts

of the ancient city of Petra. Mr. Pedotti said he was pleased that Jordan was giving facilities to the joint committee for financing these development schemes.

Cement weighs heavily on Jordanian stocks

AMMAN (R) — Jordanian shares slipped lower Saturday as selling pressure on Jordan cement factories dragged other blue-chip stocks down, brokers said.

The 60-share Amman Financial Market index fell for the 14th session in a row, losing 0.28 per cent to 169.80 points in trade worth just 585,000 dinars (\$825,000).

"There is still some selling pressure on the cement, which pulled down the

other blue-chips," said analyst Mohammad Abdullah of Pearl Consulting.

Brokers say a foreign fund has been selling Jordan Cement Factories shares, despite public assurances from the company that it had turned the corner after a poor first-half and expected to register higher sales by the end of 1997.

The sales unswayed a jittery market and have helped reverse gains racked up by the official index

since Sept. 1, when Jordan eased some foreign stock ownership rules and triggered a wave of international fund buying.

Blue chip Jordan phosphate Mines fell 0.05 dinars to 3.60 dinars in the day's heaviest trade, worth 180,000 dinars, while Arab Pharmaceutical Manufacturers fell 0.10 dinars to 4.22 dinars.

Mr. Abdullah said shares had fallen low enough to attract local buyers later in

the week. "It's reached stabilisation level. At this level even local demand will pick up," he said.

Overall, falling shares outnumbered gainers by 16 to eight, with another nine trading but closing unchanged.

The private Pearl index of the 45 best-performing shares in terms of turnover and performance fell 0.18 per cent to 81.96 points, 1.72 per cent down from Jan. 1.

India gold decision casts shadow over Dubai trade

DUBAI (R) — India's decision to relax bullion sales cast a shadow on gold trade in Dubai, shattering hopes for a rise in demand from the world's largest single market, traders said Sunday.

"Demand was good last week. It was normal, (but) Over the past two days there was less demand," one trader told Reuters.

The Indian government said Thursday it was allowing authorised importers of gold and silver, including international banks, to sell bullion in the domestic market.

The fear among traders is that Indian importers will secure the gold directly from the source, rather than through exporters in Dubai. Traders in Dubai, the main supplier of gold to the Indian subcontinent, said the decision has caused a great deal of concern in the Arab Gulf emirate.

"It's too early to say anything. We have to wait until Monday afternoon and then we will be able to tell better," one trader said when asked about his expectations for demand for next week.

"But everybody is hoping that demand will come," he said.

Traders had been expecting a rise in demand during the second half of October after the start of the festival of Dushera — celebrating the victory of good over evil — ahead of India's main wedding season.

Demand in India for jewellery had been low as many had bought their needs for the festival in July when world gold prices hit their lowest level this year, traders said. But demand for bullion bars — a common form of investment — was good, they said.

One trader said bullion demand, which appeared promising at the beginning of last week, fell over the past two days after the Indian government announcement. He declined to put any figures on the drop.

More than 80 per cent of Dubai's gold imports are re-exported to India, making the Arab Gulf emirate the world's largest physical gold redistribution centre.

REUTERS

REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates		Prices as at 19/10/97 17:52									
Currency	Unit	USD	GBP	EUR	JPY	CHF	HKD	SAR	AUD	NZD	Other
US Dollar		1.7680	0.6177	1.4742	120.75	1.3857	1729.65	1.9908	5.9303		
GB Sterling		0.5883	1.0000	0.8369	160.37	0.7842	978.80	1.2271	3.4389		
DE Mark		1.6190	2.8685	2.3653	194.61	2.2434	2900.30	3.2221	9.6012		
JP Yen		0.0083	1.4613	0.5102	121.99	1.1468	14.31	164.73	4.9072		
CHF Franc		0.7217	1.2680	0.4477	3.0285	1.15	1247.46	1.4257	4.2822		
HK Dollar		0.0008	1.0204	0.3562	0.0052	1434.51	0.8907	11.50	3.4288		
IT Lira		0.0022	38.66	0.3088	72.65	30.82	692.88	23.50	237.81		
FR Franc		0.1686	0.2974	0.1038	24.8274	20.33	0.2334	32.53	33.5300		

Middle Eastern Currencies		USD	GBP	EUR	JPY	CHF	HKD	SAR	AUD	NZD	Other
US Dollar		0.7080	3.7504	0.3770	3.6388	0.3042	3.6728	1537.00	3.3875		
Jordan Dinar		1.4124	5.2572	0.3525	5.1410	0.4297	5.1878	2178.30	4.7888		
Saudi Riyal		0.2666	0.1688	0.1005	0.57	0.0811	0.98	408.82	0.9032		
Bahrain Dinar		2.86	10.786	0.8483	8.69	0.8489	8.74	4077.33	3.8888		
Qatar Dinar		0.2747	0.1945	0.1034	1.0304	1.01	422.28	0.9307			
Kuwait Dinar		3.2873	12.3274	1.2583	12.583	1.2583	12.583	5052.80	4.8307		
Emirates Dinar		0.2723	0.1928	0.1021	1.026	0.9910	0.9828	418.48	0.9223		
Lebanese L1000		0.65	0.4806	0.2401	0.2403	0.2401	0.2403	2.2040			
Egyptian		0.2552	0.2090	0.1071	0.1113	0.1075	0.0898	1.0842	453.75		

Energy		Unit	USD	GBP	EUR	JPY	CHF	HKD	SAR	AUD	NZD	Other
Brent		19.46	19.59									
WTI		21.38	20.85									
Bonny		19.46	19.59									
Dubai		19.05	18.68									
UCL Gas		201.00	200.00									

JOD Cross Rates		Unit	USD	GBP	EUR	JPY	CHF	HKD	SAR	AUD	NZD	Other
US Dollar		0.708	0.710									
GB Sterling		1.1434	1.1481									
DE Mark		0.3998	0.4016									
JP Yen		0.4796	0.482									
FR Franc		0.1192	0.1198									
JP Yen		0.5857	0.5886									
NL Guilder		0.3545	0.3563									
IT Lira		0.4088	0.4105									

Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)		Unit	USD	GBP	EUR	JPY	CHF	HKD	SAR	AUD	NZD	Other
USD		5.50	5.65	5.75	5.85	5.92						
GBP		7.00	7.25	7.35	7.45	7.48						
JPY		0.50	0.50	0.53	0.48	0.47						
DEM		3.37	3.37	3.75	3.47	3.09						
FRF		3.48	3.65	3.80	3.95	4.19						
CHF		1.48	1.48	1.58	1.48	1.22						
ITL		6.63	6.38	6.10	5.81	5.80						

* Sources: Central Bank of Jordan

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Cuban hero hurls Marlins to 7-4 win over Cleveland

MIAMI (AFP) — Cuban defector Livan Hernandez fought through the tension of living a dream, pitching the Florida Marlins past Cleveland in the opening game of the 93rd World Series.

Hernandez scattered eight hits, walked two batters and struck out five in 5 1/3 innings here Saturday, hurling the Marlins past Cleveland 7-4 to become the youngest winning pitcher in a Series opener.

"This is a tremendous dream, pitching in the World Series," Hernandez said. "It's the ultimate."

Hernandez, four months shy of his 23rd birthday, was 3 1/2 months younger than "Smokey" Joe Wood, who pitched Boston past the New York Giants in 1912 to set the mark before the Marlin right-hander.

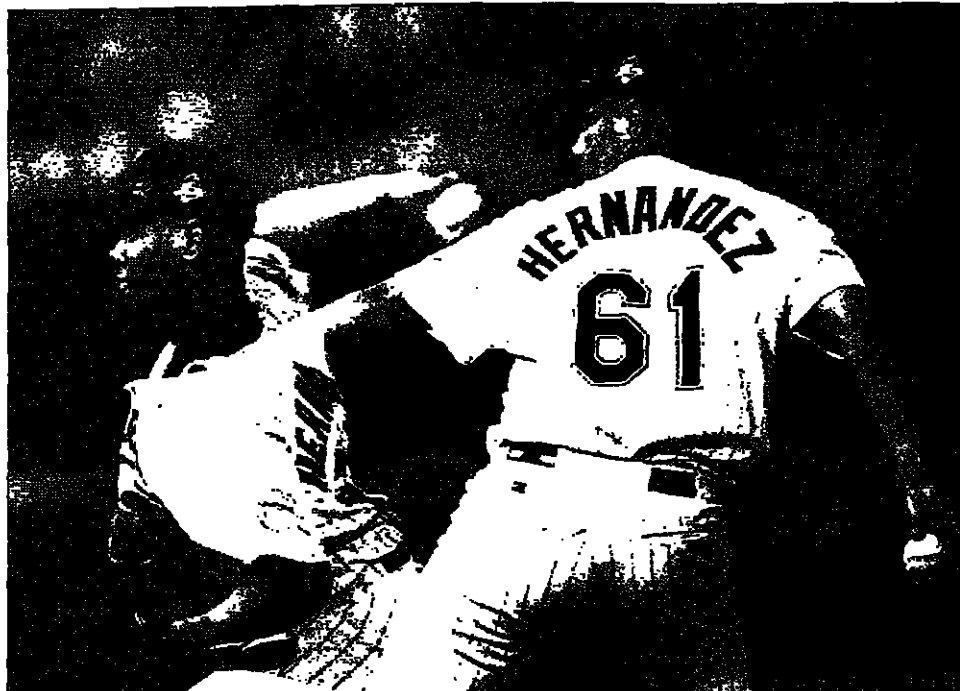
Hernandez, who defected from the Cuban national team in 1995, was the youngest Series starter since Dwight Gooden of the New York Mets in 1988 and the first Cuban to start a Series game since Luis Tiant in 1975 — when Hernandez was eight months old.

"When I was a child, I didn't even think of this. It wasn't something that even passed through my mind," Hernandez said. "It's a very wonderful experience. I'm just very excited."

Dominican Moises Alou slammed a three-run home run and Charles Johnson added a solo homer for the Marlins, a fifth-year club seeking a title in its first playoff trip. The Indians have not won the Series since 1948.

"Every game is big," Alou said. "To get the first one is awesome. We felt confident with Livan on the mound. He kept us in the game."

The best-of-seven Major League Baseball championship continues here



Florida Marlins pitcher Livan Hernandez is pictured in a double exposure as he rears back and delivers a pitch during the 5th inning of game one of the World Series October 18. Hernandez is the first Cuban to start a World Series game since Luis Tiant pitched for the Boston Red Sox in 1975 (Reuters photo)

Sunday with Florida's Kevin Brown matched against Cleveland's Chad Ogea.

On a humid and windy night before 67,245 fans, the largest Series crowd since 69,000 jammed Yankee Stadium in 1963, Hernandez overcame a shaky first inning to thwart the Indians.

"He settled down and pitched real well," Marlins manager Jim Leyland said. "He was obviously hyped. He did a great job."

Hernandez said poor control, not nerves, caused the biggest problems.

"I wasn't any more nervous than any other game. I felt fine," he said. "I only had my fastball working. My breaking ball was not there. I had bad pitches. I wasn't throwing well. I wasn't hitting the strike zone."

Cleveland's Marquis Grissom saw it differently. "He kept the ball away from everybody," Grissom

said. "We could have gotten him if he had stayed in longer. But Jim Leyland did a great job of changing pitchers."

Leyland removed Hernandez in the sixth so he would not face Bip Roberts, who had twice doubled off him.

The first rookie pitcher to start a Series opener in nine years showed his frustration in the team dugout by hitting a medical kit, kicking at stairs and pounding on a wall.

"I wasn't going to let him see Bip again," Leyland said. "I felt that would be unfair to Livan and I wasn't going to let him do that."

Hernandez said he was mad at himself more than being removed.

Cleveland starting pitcher Orel Hershiser was woefully off target, surrendering seven runs to match a Series record for ineptitude by a single pitcher.

The 39-year-old right-hander gave up six hits and

walked four Florida batters in 4 1/3 innings after walking only three batters in three prior playoff starts.

Hershiser's low came in the fourth inning when Alou slammed his homer off the left-field foul pole and Johnson followed to put Florida up 5-1. It marked the first back-to-back Series homers since 1986.

Florida's inconsistent relievers allowed potential tying runs to bat in the eighth and ninth innings. But Jay Powell struck out Omar Vizquel to end the eighth and Robb Nen struck out Matt Williams and Sandy Alomar to end the game.

"We had a couple opportunities where we didn't capitalize," Grissom said. "We had guys on third base with one out. Those are situations you have to capitalize on. We've got to get that timely hitting. They got big key hits and we didn't."

Ronaldo doubt for UEFA Cup match

MILAN (AFP) — Inter Milan beat Napoli 2-0 to stay top of the Italian Serie A on Saturday, but their UEFA Cup hopes took a knock as Brazilian ace Ronaldo suffered an injury which makes him doubtful for Tuesday's tie with French club Lyon.

Defender Fabio Galante opened the scoring in the ninth minute and Dutch midfielder Aron Winter finished it in the 69th, his shot taking a deflection off Napoli midfielder Francesco Turrini.

But Ronaldo, who bagged a hat-trick in Inter's midweek Italian Cup win at Piacenza, failed to score after taking an early knock from Napoli's Argentine defender Roberto Ayala.

Inter coach Gigi Simoni said: "Ronaldo took a kick after five minutes and this had an effect on his performance for the rest of the match."

"In fact, there are serious doubts that he will recover in time for Tuesday's UEFA Cup tie."

The Brazilian star, who has scored nine goals in as many games for Inter this season, played on Saturday with a bruised left thigh and could now miss the second round, first leg tie at San Siro.

Ronaldo said: "I got kicked by Ayala at the start of the game. But it was a match that was important to win and to keep the momentum going."

"I didn't score, but that doesn't matter: what counted was getting the three points."

Simoni, who coached Napoli last season before being sacked, was not entirely happy with his team's performance.

"We could have played better," he said. "We were too quick to think the match was already won and we eased off sooner than we should have done."

Goalkeeper Gianluca Pagliuca sees no limit though to Inter's potential this season, saying: "UEFA Cup, Italian

Cup and league title — we want to win everything, especially the league."

Saturday's victory at the San Paolo stadium settled a score between the two clubs.

When they met in Naples last season for a place in the Italian Cup final, Inter lost a penalty shoot-out after playing most of the game with 10 men.

Inter's superb start to the season has now brought them five wins and one draw from their opening six league games. They were five points clear at the top before AS Roma, Parma and Juventus played on Sunday.

There was no such luck, however, for high-flying Lazio, who were brought down to earth by Atalanta in suffering a 2-0 defeat before their own fans at the Olympic stadium.

Yugoslav midfielder Ljubisa Djundjerski was the architect of Atalanta's surprise win, making one goal and scoring the other.

Atalanta, with suspended coach Emiliano Mondonico watching from the stands rather than the dugout, scored with their first real attack of the match in the 33rd minute.

The visitors worked a short corner. Djundjerski's goal-bound effort forced a desperate parry from Lazio goalkeeper Luca Marchegiani and Andre Sotil was there to drive home the loose ball.

Marchegiani was to blame again in the fifth minute of first-half injury time, when he appeared to have Djundjerski's powerful free-kick well covered, only to allow the ball to slip past him.

Atalanta had defender Paolo Foglio sent off after an hour for a second bookable offence, but still held on to the points.

There was another upset in the night match as UEFA Cup hopefuls Udinese needed a late equaliser to draw 2-2 with 10-man Empoli.

Gascoigne shines in Rangers seventh heaven

GLASGOW (AFP) — Paul Gascoigne was in devastating form as Rangers crushed Dunfermline 7-0 to go top of the Scottish Premier division for the first time this season on Saturday.

But the England midfielder, currently being linked with a return to English football, was upstaged by his Italian team mate Marco Negri, who hit the target four times to bring his tally to 22 goals in a remarkable first season with the Scottish champions.

Danish international Brian Laudrup scored the other goal as Dunfermline were completely outplayed.

At the end of what could be his last match for the Glasgow giants, Gascoigne was given a rousing reception by the fans after dominating the midfield for 90 minutes.

But Dunfermline boss Bert Paton paid tribute to Gascoigne, one of the stars of England's 0-0 World Cup qualification-clinching draw with Italy in Rome last week.

Meanwhile, Rangers' Old Firm rivals Celtic outlined their title credentials with a superb display to defeat Hearts 2-1 at Tynecastle after surviving a late flurry to go second in the table.

Elsewhere, under-fire Aberdeen boss Roy Aitken could breathe a little easier after the Dons beat Hibernian 2-0 to record their first premier league victory of the season and only their third league win since last Christmas.

Dundee United also secured their first league win of the season in emphatic fashion with a 4-0 demolition of Motherwell while St Johnstone celebrated a 1-0 victory at Kilmarnock.



Michael Tarnat of Bayern Munich (L) scores during his team's German first division soccer match with Karlsruher SC. Karlsruher's players (From 2nd L-R) Sean Dundee, Markus Schroth and Marc Keller look on. The match ended in a 1-1 draw (Reuters photo)

Kaiserslautern preserve lead

COLOGNE (AFP) — Lady luck smiled on Kaiserslautern as they staged off a barnstorming Bayer Leverkusen to grab a 1-1 draw on Saturday to maintain their four-point lead over Bayern Munich, who likewise finished 1-1 in Karlsruhe.

"I have to say this was our worst game since I have been with the club in the Bundesliga," Kaiserslautern's coach Otto Rehagel readily admitted.

"Leverkusen were clearly the better team. They controlled the game for the whole 90 minutes. The one point we got here today was more than satisfactory."

Rehagel knew his side had survived a big test and could count itself lucky not to have been blown away by a dominant Leverkusen, who did not allow a single Kaiserslautern crack at goal during the opening 20 minutes.

After a swathe of early chances Leverkusen defender Markus Happe finally broke through after 72 minutes, but an error by Bayer teammate Nico Kovac 13 minutes later allowed Jurgen Rische to paddle in the equaliser after

keeper Dirk Heinen misjudged a floating cross.

Kaiserslautern's defence was at sixes and sevens in the early phases of the game reacting like a "punch-drunk boxer," as Rehagel himself described it. His Leverkusen counterpart Christoph Daum was furious after sacrificing two points so negligently and struggled to contain his emotions.

A superbly-executed free kick by Michael Tarnat in the 78th minute gave Bayern Munich one point in Karlsruhe ahead of next Tuesday's second round Champions League tie against Paris St. Germain.

Markus Schroth had put the home side in the lead after 40 minutes.

The two sides are keen rivals because wealthy Bayern have made a habit of pinching Karlsruhe's top talents in recent years, among them the prize scalps of Mehmet Scholl, Oliver Kahn, Thorsten Fink and goalscorer Tarnat.

In the end two points went begging for Karlsruhe but the draw was a large improvement on their 3-1 defeat in Hamburg mid-week.

European champions Borussia Dortmund just avoided their fifth consecutive loss as they ground out a 0-0 draw in a Ruhr derby against Duisburg. Four days before they square up against AC Parma in the Champions' League, the old

club of Dortmund coach Nevio Scala, there is no sign of any improvement with the club stuck in the relegation zone.

"Duisburg have more experience," playmaker Andreas Moller said as he tried to explain away the game's low standard. "That's why we have to think small. We will run, fight and chase in the coming weeks and do everything we can to get out of the basement. If we stick together and get some order back into our game we will find the goals again."

Hansa Rostock meanwhile climbed to third with a 4-1 hammering against UEFA Cup holders Schalke. Few would have predicted that five goals would fall in a game which, on paper, appeared set to become a battle of two strong defences.

But Rostock raced to a 3-0 lead through Jens Dowe, Oliver Neuville and a Sergej Barabaz penalty. Schalke's Michael Goossens pulled one back in the second half but Rostock's Igor Pamic put the result beyond doubt in the 88th minute when he clipped the ball home at the end of a sweeping Hansa fast break.

Stuttgart meanwhile blasted Hertha Berlin, who have now lost all six away matches this season. Hertha's coach Jurgen Rober now finds his job on the line.

Hingis, Sanchez into Zurich doubles final

ZURICH (AFP) — World No.1 Martina Hingis threw off the disappointment of her singles exit and advanced to the final of the doubles alongside Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario of the WTA Tour doubles event here late Saturday.

The pair took just 47 minutes to dispose of Conchita Martinez of Spain and Argentina's Patricia Tarabini 6-2, 6-1 and will now face Larissa Neiland of Latvia and Helena Sukova

of the Czech Republic, who beat Lindsay Davenport of the U.S. and Czech Jana Novotna 7-6 (7/4), 6-4.

Hingis, surprisingly beaten in the singles quarter-finals by American Lisa Raymond on Friday, played despite chipping a tooth ear-

lier when she fell off a horse.

"The fall was far less serious, however, than the one she in which she badly injured her knee earlier this year and which ruined her build-up for the French Open.

LECTURE POSTPONEMENT
The Friends of Archaeology announces the postponement of its lecture which was to take place on Monday, October 20, to a later date to be announced.

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PHILADELPHIA "1"		PHILADELPHIA "2"		PLAZA		CONCORD		GALLERIA 1		GALLERIA 2			
Jessica Lange & Halle Berry ... in		Tom Cruise ... in		Julia Roberts ... in		Geena Davis & Samuel Jackson ... in		ABDOUN		ABDOUN			
LOSING ISALAH		MISSION IMPOSSIBLE		MY BEST FRIEND'S WEDDING		THE LONG KISS GOOD NIGHT		Will Smith & Tommy Lee Jones ... in		Tim Allen ... in		Watch out for the new play	
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30		Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30		Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30		(12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30)		MEN IN BLACK		JUNGLE 2 JUNGLE		THE GOVERNMENT IN THE SERVICE OF PEOPLE	
						FAIR GAME		Shows: 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:45		Shows: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30		Starring Hisham Yares and Amal Dabbas	
						Shows: 3:30, 6:00 only							

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Venables says no to Benfica

LONDON (AFP) — Australian national team coach Terry Venables has turned down a chance to manage Portuguese club Benfica because of his commitments with the Soccer and English first division side Portsmouth. The former England manager, now in charge of Australia and director of football at Portsmouth, said Saturday: "There was a wonderful offer and it appealed to me. It would have been perfect but it has come at the wrong time. I am committed to Australia and would not even consider breaking my contract with them."

Giant screens for 98 World Cup

PARIS (AFP) — Would-be World Cup punters who fail to land tickets for next summer's French jamboree need not despair — they will be able to sit in a town square and watch the action on giant television screens. Organisers agreed the plan to erect the screens in major towns after consulting the ministry for sport and youth as well as broadcasters and FIFA. The costs of installing the outdoor "cine-soccer" is estimated at around \$8,000 per night or \$160,000 for the month-long tournament.

Kucera wins Ostrava final

OSTRAVA, Czech Republic (AFP) — Karol Kucera made the most of Magnus Norman's injury to win 6-2 retired and capture the million-dollar ATP event here on Sunday. It was the 32nd world-ranked Slovakian's second tour success and took just 27 minutes. Meanwhile 28th-ranked Norman of Sweden became the second player to retire in the later rounds following that of Croatian Goran Ivanisevic who lost 6-3 retired to eighth seed Kucera in the semi-final. Seventh seed Norman's problem was a recurrence of a leg injury from two weeks previously during a match against Spain's Sergi Bruguera.

Chess championships in December

MOSCOW (AFP) — Bulgarian grandmaster Veselin Topalov has decided to compete in the revamped world chess championships set to begin in Groningen, the Netherlands, in mid-December, the Sport-Express daily said here Saturday. Topalov, ranking fourth in the world, had earlier refused to play in the tournament pending a financial agreement with the World Chess Federation (FIDE), but recently he reached a deal with FIDE, the paper said. Two leading grandmasters have opted to stay away from the championships, which for the first time will consist of a knock-out tournament — Russia's Garry Kasparov, the Professional Chess Association world champion, and former Soviet citizen Gata Kamsky, now based in the United States. Reigning FIDE world champion Anatoly Karpov will join the championships at the final stage.

Amman Little League

Tots Division 1990-1992 (all are winners)
Klim vs. ATRO
McDonald's vs. Delonghi

Juniors One Division 1988-1989
IPCO 0 vs. Nokia
Varta 1 vs. Al Jawhara 0

Standings: Nokia 11 points; Varta 7 points; Al Jawhara 6 points; IPCO 3 points

Juniors Two Division 1986-1987
Porsche 3 vs. RJ 2
RMCCS 2 vs. Intervet 4
RMCCS 3 vs. RJ 1 (played Oct. 11th)
Porsche 2 vs. Intervet (played Oct. 13th)

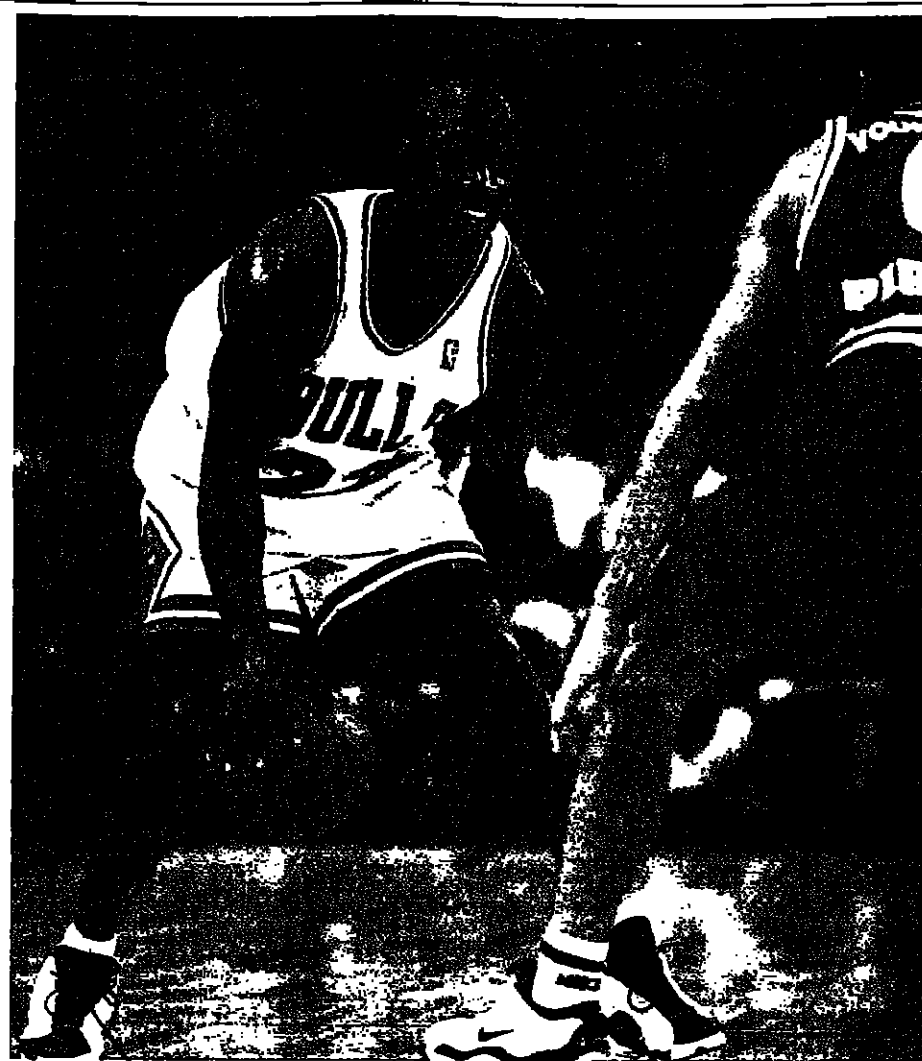
Standings: Intervet 13 points; RMCCS 7 points; Porsche 8 points; RJ 0 points

Mids Division 1984-1985
Amigo Nabil 2 vs. Dune's Club

Standings: Dune's Club 10 points; Reimert 4 points; Amigo Nabil 8 points; Arby's 3 points

Senior Division 1981-1983
Zalatio 4 vs. Coffee Break 2
Jordan Insurance 3 vs. Coaches 4

Standings: Zalatio 7 points; Coffee Break 3 points; Jordan Insurance 4 points



Jordan leads Bulls to victory: Michael Jordan scored a game-high 27 points on Saturday night as the Chicago Bulls beat Olympiakos of Greece 104-78 in the final of the McDonald's Championship, the unofficial world club championship. The Bulls maintained the United States' unbeaten record in the tournament, which was first played in 1987 (Reuters photo)

Santoro wins 1st ATP title in 9 years

LYON (AFP) — France's Fabrice Santoro beat Germany's Tommy Haas 6-4, 6-4 here on Sunday for his first ever ATP tour victory in this 750,000-dollar event.

Santoro, ranked just 42nd in the world, cast aside the 19-year-old Haas, who has come out of the Nick Bollettieri academy in Florida and is currently ranked 67 — a rapid rise from his 1995 ranking of 1,192nd.

Santoro paid his opponent compliments after the match: "He's a talented player and I hope he does not wait nine years like me for his first tour success."

The 24-year-old Frenchman was ranked just 118 in the world a year ago and was even thinking about retiring. But, with the help of father Marcel who became his coach at the beginning of the year, he has improved out of all recognition.

It took him an hour and 21 minutes to see off his opponent and he had to come back from 3-0 down in the second set to earn the \$101,000 winner's cheque.

Santoro had beaten 17th-ranked Richard Krajicek of Holland, 14th-ranked Felix Mantilla of Spain and Australia's 18th-ranked Mark Philippoussis up to the final.

Becker to Stuttgart without high hopes

STUTTGART (AFP) — Holder Boris Becker will make a low-key entry into this week's 2.3 million-dollar Eurocard Open, with few illusions that in his current state of form he can successfully defend his title.

The 29-year-old German tennis icon is gradually winding down his career and will play in no more Grand Slams. His self-proclaimed main focus until he finally retires — likely in 1998 — will be developing his new role as Davis Cup manager for Germany.

Injured over the summer and autumn, the three-time Wimbledon champion has competed in only seven matches since losing in the quarter-finals at the All England club and bowing out of Grand Slam competition.

Stuttgart which begins Monday at the Schleyer arena. The 48-man event is the penultimate Mercedes Super 9 of the year and is critical for those eight men aiming for the season-ending ATP Tour World Championships in Hanover next month.

Becker, at 22nd in the world, has no hopes for Hanover and freely admits: "I'm ready for Stuttgart, though I'm not really looking to next week, but more to the next few months. My focus is from one Davis Cup to the other."

Last year, Becker completed a triumph for the

German game as he beat Pete Sampras in five sets to take the home title.

This year, the German will not be seeded and must fight his way through the draw. "I'm the defending champion but I'm not thinking about another title," he said.

The tournament's entry list includes all of the world's Top 20, though Spain's Albert Costa 'on 20th could be doubtful after withdrawing at the Marlboro with tendonitis in a shoulder.

Another injury pullout is former World No. 1 Jim Courier, who cancelled his appearance because of an undisclosed injury.

Another former elite player, Andre Agassi, now 102 in the world, has been given a wild card entry, though his interest in European events can sometimes seem lukewarm at best.

The rest of the field behind world number one Pete Sampras and Michael Chang will be headed by U.S. Open champion Patrick Rafter, Ivanisevic, World No. 5 Briton Greg Rusedski and sixth-ranked Spaniard Carlos Moya.

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Black beats Kuerten to win Hong Kong title

HONG KONG (AFP) — Zimbabwe's Byron Black won the \$725,000 Hong Kong Championships with a hard-fought five-set victory in the final over French Open champion Gustavo Kuerten on Sunday.

The 28-year-old Black took home the \$220,000 first prize, one of the biggest pay cheques of his career, after defeating Brazilian Kuerten 6-3, 6-7 (4/7), 6-2, 3-6, 7-6 (7/5).

The rain-interrupted final lasted three hours and 23 minutes.

Black, ranked 60th in the world, played the same kind of solid baseline game which he used to eliminate world number eight Marcelo Rios in the preliminary rounds and German ace Boris Becker in the semi-finals.

Black's superior fitness and coolness

under pressure proved decisive in the final-set tie-break against Kuerten, the world number 11.

"It was a very up and down match," said Black. "First, I had two rain-postponed doubles matches on Saturday as well as a single semi-final."

Kuerten said he felt tired in the fifth set.

"I think towards the end of the match both of us were a bit tired," the Brazilian said. "In the fifth set, some of the balls were not as easy as they were in the first."

"But he deserved to win. He was that two points better than me and that's all he needed."

Kuerten will now travel to Europe trying to pick up enough ranking points to qualify for the year-ending ATP Championships in Hanover, Germany.

United fightback salvages point

LONDON (AFP) — Manchester United came from two goals behind to snatch a draw at Derby as Everton upset all pre-match predictions by beating Liverpool 2-0 in a typically passionate Merseyside English Premier League derby on Saturday.

Arsenal, though, stayed top of the English Premier League despite being held to a goalless draw at London rivals Crystal Palace while Leeds United provided the shock result of the day by thrashing Newcastle 4-1.

United were facing their third defeat in five games after falling behind to first half goals from Italian Francesco Baiano and Costa Rican Paulo Wanchope at Derby.

But after a heated half-time talk from furious United manager Alex Ferguson, the reigning champions hit back after the break through Teddy Sheringham and Andy Cole, who salvaged a point six minutes from time.

Derby, one of the surprises of the new season, were on the receiving end of a verbal lashing from their own manager Jim Smith after throwing away near-certain victory.

Leeds boss George Graham was delighted with his team's 4-1 demolition of Newcastle at Elland Road, which lifted the Yorkshire side to sixth.

"It was a great performance and the way the lads played throughout it has to be one of our best performances," Graham said.

"Before the game Newcastle could have been right up there if they win the games in hand and you just look at the names of their players — they're something special."

"But we've got rid of the prima donnas. My players are honest and have ability but, especially, they have a great spirit."

Everton manager Howard Kendall hailed the same men he slammed in mid-week after a 2-0 win over star-studded local rivals Liverpool courtesy of an own goal by Neil Ruddock and a second half strike by 17-year-old sensation Danny Cadamarteri.

Kendall witnessed a stunning improvement on Wednesday's humiliating 4-1 League Cup defeat to Coventry and the win lifted his team out of the bottom three.

Blackburn moved into second after a hard fought 1-0 win over struggling Southampton that was sealed by a first half goal from captain Tim Sherwood.

Blackburn boss Roy Hodgson, though, was quick to play down talk of the revitalised Lancashire club sustaining a challenge for the title.

He said: "I don't know if we can win the league. We have a lot of work still to do. There are teams above us, and teams who will be rivals to win the championship, who have a lot of experience."

Arsenal manager Arsene

Wenger was left fuming after his star striker Dennis Bergkamp was booked in the goalless draw at Palace.

A fifth yellow card of the season means a three-match ban that will keep the Dutch star out of the crucial clash with champions Manchester United on November 9.

Wenger said: "I could not see why he was booked but I can understand his frustrations. You see so many things which are done to him but are not punished."

Told that Wenger thought the game was too physical, Palace boss Coppell said: "He would do, wouldn't he?"

"I'm sure Bergkamp has had tougher treatment than that. He has been exceptional in recent weeks and we had to try and keep him quiet."

Leicester manager Martin O'Neill admitted he was close to tears after seeing his side beaten by Frenchman Frank Leboeuf's spectacular strike just three minutes from time at Chelsea.

Wimbledon teenager Carl Cort proved his side's saviour again with a second-half winner in a 2-1 victory at Aston Villa.

Strugglers Bolton had Gerry Taggart sent off as they lost 3-0 at West Ham.

KENZ

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British Chevening Scholarships Programme

The British Embassy's Chevening Scholarships Programme offers funds for postgraduate study in the United Kingdom.

For the academic year 1998/99, we are looking for scholars with a record of excellence, either professional or academic, who will use their studies in the UK in the application of their work in Jordan. Priority is given to candidates with excellent command of English and some relevant work experience. Also, candidates should be under the age of 40.

Chevening Scholarships are normally awarded for Masters degrees, but applications for short term courses of three months or more will be considered. However, applications for PhD degrees, medicine and dentistry will not be considered.

Candidates are encouraged to apply in humanities and in social sciences. We will not be able to support students in the arts, archaeology or medical sciences apart from those in community health and environment.

The Scholarship will be for the individual only. Thus, no financial or other assistance will be given to the scholars' families to accompany them to Britain.

There are different types of scholarships. Some cover only the tuition fees while others also cover part or all of the living expenses. In almost all cases the scholarships do not cover airfares and the scholars will be expected to make some contribution towards the cost of their studies.

Application forms along with detailed information on the scholarship and on completing the forms can be collected from The British Embassy or The British Council in Amman during 18-31 October 1997. The deadline for receiving completed applications is 6 November 1997. Moreover, any submitted document cannot be reclaimed and must therefore be a photocopy and not an original.

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THE GOVERNMENT IN THE SERVICE OF PEOPLE

Government confiscates Arab papers — press

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Correspondents of Arab newspapers in Amman this week complained that the government is barring the entry of their publications to the Kingdom for allegedly infringing on the Press and Publications Law.

Several issues of the London-based Al Quds Al Arabi, Al Sharq Al Awsat, Al Hayat and the Lebanese daily Al Nahar were confiscated during the past two weeks by the Press and Publications Department at the Ministry of Information. While the Amman correspondents charge that the confiscation measures are part of a new government policy targeting the press, the government insists that it is only applying prevailing laws.

"We are just applying the law," said Bilal Tal, the new director of the Press and Publications Department. "There is no predetermined stand against any newspaper nor are we pursuing institu-

tionalised [censorship] policies. The matter is that they [correspondents] should be more accurate in their coverage," of Jordanian news.

Correspondents, meanwhile, say the confiscation measures, which they claim were on the increase lately, are largely related to their coverage of the assassination attempt against Hamas politburo chief Khaled Misha'al which was carried out in Amman by two Israeli Mossad agents on Sept. 25.

Head of the Amman office of Al Quds Al Arabi, Bassam Badarin, said the government had banned the entry of the daily for 12 successive days without giving official notification or justification. He said that while the newspaper has suffered from confiscation in the past, it was the first time that it is denied entry for such a long period. He said the coverage of the assassination attempt "has not been any different from what was published in the local newspapers." He said the newspaper is considering closing down its offices in

Amman.

Chief Editor Abdul Hadi Atwan sent a letter to the Press and Publications Department last week in protest against the confiscation measures and said the editorial administration is considering the closure of its office in Amman "if such practices continue," Mr. Badarin said.

The London-based Al Hayat was also confiscated three times during the past two weeks. Its correspondent in Amman, Salameh Ne'matt, charges that the government is adopting "oppressive policies" against the media and the press in general.

"We have never had such measures taken against us during the martial law era," said Mr. Ne'matt. "These measures are incurring considerable losses on the newspaper."

The correspondents say most violations seem to be based on Article 40b of the Press and Publications Law which prohibits publications from writing any material considered as harming to the security forces.



HIZBOLLAH'S YOUNGSTERS ON BOARD: A Marine from Britain's HMS York greets Lebanese Hizbollah boy scouts during their visit to the destroyer at the port of Beirut Sunday. HMS York is on a three-day visit in Lebanon (Reuters photo)

U.S. seeks to limit damage in Greek-Turkish relations

WASHINGTON (R) — A U.S. breakthrough three months ago in improving relations between feuding NATO allies Greece and Turkey has turned into a damage-limitation exercise as the two countries play war games around Cyprus.

Washington's latest attempt to broker an end to the 23-year-old division of Cyprus is having to focus for the time being on cooling tempers in Athens and Ankara in the hope that progress can be resumed soon, U.S. officials say.

The upsurge of tension accompanied joint Greek and Greek-Cypriot military exercises that were held Oct. 10-15 in the south of Cyprus. Turkey and Greece played cat and mouse games in Aegean Sea airspace and over Cyprus, with their fighter planes involved in dozens of sorties and mock dogfights.

The U.S. State Department last week called on both countries to reinstate a ban that each had separately declared in May on military overflights of Cyprus, but the appeal was greeted with defiance in both Athens and Ankara.

Meanwhile, Turkey said it would stage its own exercises along with Turkish-Cypriot forces in the first week of November.

State Department officials acknowledged that the situa-

tion had deteriorated sharply since they persuaded Greece and Turkey at a NATO summit in Madrid in July to issue a set of six principles of good neighbourly relations.

Among other things the Greek and Turkish foreign ministers agreed in Madrid "to refrain from unilateral acts on the basis of mutual respect and willingness to avoid conflicts arising from misunderstanding."

"It's a roller-coaster and that clearly hasn't changed," one U.S. official said of the Greek-Turkish relationship. "Unfortunately, what's happened in the last week is that there's been a downslide on the roller-coaster and they have been very provocative towards each other."

The division of Cyprus, which dates from a 1974 Turkish invasion of the northern third of the island in response to a brief Greek-Cypriot military coup in Nicosia, has defied repeated settlement attempts by the U.N. and others.

It was marked out as a priority by U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright when she took office last January.

She believes Greece and Turkey, which are at loggerheads over rights in the Aegean as well as Cyprus, must set an example to eastern European countries which are being told to settle their

mutual disputes as a condition for joining NATO.

Ms. Albright had Richard Holbrooke, famed negotiator of the 1995 Bosnia peace accord, named special envoy for Cyprus and she also appointed Thomas Miller, a former U.S. diplomat in Greece, as State Department "coordinator" on the problem.

Mr. Holbrooke was in Ankara last week and Mr. Miller was in Athens, seeking to prevent the latest crisis from getting worse.

U.S. officials said they had known of the Greek and Greek-Cypriot exercise even when the Madrid declaration was issued.

"We knew that this was going to be problem time," one official said. "We asked them to really think twice about this, that it should be avoided, but they have gone ahead, and what everyone knew would happen has happened."

"People hope that once the exercises are over, we can quickly get back and things should calm down," he added.

U.S. officials admit, however, that there are longer-term problems that are impeding progress.

One is a plan by the Greek-Cypriot government to import and deploy Russian-made anti-aircraft missiles by the end of next year. Turkey has called this a threat to its secu-

rity and warned that it might strike at the missiles.

Another is the proposal by the European Union (EU), announced just days after the Madrid declaration, to start talks with Cyprus and five east European countries early next year on admitting them as members.

Although Washington supports Cypriot membership of the EU and had even hoped its prospect might spur a settlement on Cyprus, one official said: "The timing [of the EU statement] was horrible because it just raised the issue publicly."

With no prospect of talks on Turkey joining the EU starting any time soon, Turkish-Cypriots have reacted with hostility, saying the Greek-Cypriot government cannot represent them in accession negotiations.

U.S. officials said that despite the setbacks, things were not entirely bleak and at least the two sides were talking.

Cypriot President Glafkos Clerides and Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denkash have met several times in recent months, most recently in Nicosia on Sept. 26, although little progress has been reported.

Turkish Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz and his Greek counterpart Costas Simitis are due to meet in Crete on November.

Palestinians prepare historic first census

RAMALLAH (AFP) — In a move designed to assert their hoped for sovereignty over the West Bank, Gaza Strip and Arab east Jerusalem, Palestinians are wrapping up preparations for the first independent census of the occupied territories, officials said Sunday.

Hassan Abu Libdah, head of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) Census Department, said an army of 6,000 unemployed university graduates would launch the historic head count on the West Bank, Gaza Strip and Arab east Jerusalem on Dec. 10.

Preliminary results will be released on January 4 after approval by PNA President Yasser Arafat. The \$6 million cost of the census is being provided by the U.N., Switzerland and Britain.

"This is a practice which is carried out internationally, usually by independent sovereign states, but it will be the first time such a census is done by the Palestinians," he told Agence France Presse at his Ramallah office.

"This is a step towards building sovereignty and overcoming the political divisions imposed by Oslo," he said, referring to interim peace accords which divided the West Bank and Gaza Strip into PNA ruled zones, areas under joint Palestinian-Israeli administration and land still under full Israeli control.

Preparations for the cen-

sus began three years ago after the establishment of the first Palestinian-ruled enclaves in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho, Mr. Libdah said.

Census workers divided the occupied territories up into regions, including Arab east Jerusalem, and will attempt to carry out the count in all areas despite possible Israeli interference, notably in the Holy City, he said.

Current estimates put the population of the Palestinian territories and Arab east Jerusalem at around 2.5 million, although there has been no formal census conducted since Israel held a count shortly after the start of its occupation of the areas in 1967. The results of that census were never released.

Earlier counts had been carried out in turn by the Ottomans in 1834, the British in 1922, 1931 and 1936 and the Jordanians on the West Bank in 1951 and 1961.

Mr. Libdah said the census would not only count heads but gather economic and social information concerning Palestinian education levels, household belongings and activities.

"This census will change a lot about many common beliefs concerning Palestinian society," Mr. Libdah predicted.

The official said Palestinians were concerned that the Israeli army

"might disrupt the field work in areas under its control."

But he said "what is more important, is that we will have the courage to announce the results despite the possible political implications."

He gave as examples a possible finding that Palestinian education levels are lower than believed or that the population of some areas is below previous estimates, a fact which could complicate peace negotiations with the Israelis.

Plans for the census have gone ahead at a time when the peace process has slid into crisis over the headline policies of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Implementation of interim peace accords between the two sides has virtually been frozen due to disputes over Jewish settlement construction in the occupied territories and to anti-Israeli attacks by Islamist groups opposed to peace.

Mr. Netanyahu has also refused to carry out promised troop withdrawals from rural areas of the West Bank, more than 70 per cent of which remains under full Israeli control.

Negotiations on the final status of the territories which Palestinians hope will result in creation of an independent state have also been put on hold.

Israeli mothers demonstrate at border for Lebanon pullout

KIRYAT SHEMONA (R) — Mothers of Israeli soldiers serving in Lebanon demonstrated at a military border crossing on Saturday, urging a unilateral army pullout from the self-declared "security" zone in south Lebanon.

Heavy Israeli losses in clashes with Hizbollah guerrillas have spurred domestic debate on a withdrawal from the "security zone" that Israel declared in 1985 as it pulled back from its invasion of Lebanon three years before.

Scores of protesters stood near a main military gateway to the self-declared zone on Saturday, waving at heavily armed soldiers entering Lebanon in a convoy of armoured vehicles.

"We've lost far too many soldiers over the years, and

the four mothers movement is asking the government to unilaterally withdraw from the security zone... in order to defend ourselves like every other country does," said demonstrator Linda Ben-Zvi, whose son served in Lebanon.

The four mothers group was founded earlier this year after 73 soldiers serving in Lebanon were killed in a collision of two army helicopters bound for the zone.

Many protesters carried signs reading "Leave Lebanon in peace."

"Our country is putting our soldiers in an impossible situation, asking them to fight a guerrilla war, and historically no one ever wins in a guerrilla war," Ms. Ben-Zvi said.

Hizbollah has pledged to drive Israeli troops from

Lebanese soil.

Ms. Ben-Zvi said the "security zone" had proved a security liability which did not prevent guerrilla rocket attacks on Israel, usually carried out in retaliation for Israeli strikes at Lebanese civilian centres.

"Katyushas can still rain on northern settlements from north of the security zone," she said.

"In fact, when Katyushas come into Israel, quite often they come in because of something that happened in the security zone, so our so-called security zone is not offering us tremendous loss of life."

Israel was sending its troops to a place where they were unable to defend themselves, she said.

"We're saying 'enough... we want our soldiers home.'"

Israel apologised over bellydancer case — Egyptian FM

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa said Sunday that Israel had officially apologised to his country over the harassment of the Egyptian ambassador in Israel.

"The Israeli government has presented official excuses over everything concerning Ambassador Mohammad (Bassiouni)," Mr. Musa said, quoted by the government daily Al Ahram.

"We have taken notice but such pettiness should not occur again," Mr. Musa said.

Over the past few days Israeli officials have undertaken a damage limitation exercise to preserve relations with Egypt after allegations by an Israeli bellydancer that Mr. Bassiouni tried to rape her were dismissed. "We have been on the brink of disaster," a high-level Israeli Foreign Ministry official told Agence France Presse Friday, saying he still feared diplomatic fallout from the accusations made against Mr. Bassiouni.

The Israeli Foreign

Ministry has showered praise on the ambassador and its director general, Eytan Bentsur, underscored the "important contribution to the peace process" made by Mr. Bassiouni. "The matter is closed. I have full confidence in this ambassador and appreciate his work," Mr. Bentsur said Friday.

Mr. Bassiouni, ambassador to Israel since 1986, had considered packing up and returning home but changed his mind after obtaining assurances that no lawsuit would be filed against him, Israeli Television reported.

The incident is sure to be discussed when Mr. Musa makes a rare visit to Israel next Monday, ostensibly to attend the opening of a peace centre run by former Prime Minister Shimon Peres.

Egypt was the first Arab country to sign a peace treaty with Israel in 1979, but relations between the two countries have rapidly deteriorated since the election last year of right-wing Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

British hostage in Yemen says he's being treated well

SANAA (AP) — A British aid worker abducted by Yemeni tribesmen has sent a letter to his family saying he is being treated well by his kidnappers, a British embassy spokesman said Sunday.

The embassy received a letter from the Briton, who has not been identified, in which he said he was "well-treated, well-fed and comfortable."

He said the embassy passed the letter on to the man's family in the U.K. Yemeni authorities received the letter on Saturday.

Negotiations between Yemeni authorities and the kidnappers, who are from the Bani Zabyan tribe, were continuing, the spokesman said.

The Briton, who works for a Japanese development agency in Sanaa, was abducted on Wednesday along with his translator while they were driving from the city of Ta'ez, 273 kilometres south of the capital Sanaa.

The men were brought to an area outside Marib, 173 kilometres east of Sanaa.

On Saturday, more than 100 soldiers in trucks mounted with machine guns surrounded the area in an attempt to force the release of the two men.

Officials have said that the head of the tribe, Sheikh Mubarak Ali Saadah, has demanded the government provide financial aid and increased services to his people.

Yemeni tribes have frequently kidnapped foreigners to press for money or government financing of development projects.

Last month, Yemen said it would increase security for tourists in an attempt to prevent kidnappings, which have risen to an unprecedented level this year.

This year, 30 tourists, including 14 Italians and 11 Germans have been kidnapped. All were released unharmed.

Yemen, a poor country in the southwest corner of the Arabian Peninsula, attracts thousands of tourists a year to its archaeological sites, most of which are located in remote, mountainous areas.

Semi-nude wedding held in southern Taiwan

TAIPEI (AFP) — A Taiwanese actress, wearing nothing but leaves to cover her private parts, tied the knot in Kaohsiung's first semi-nude wedding on Sunday. The event, billed as the "Wedding of Eden," was witnessed by 1,000 people who paid \$34 each in entry fees. The happy bride, Hsu Hsiao-tan, and her groom, businessman Wang Tung-cheng, wearing only his briefs, were married in an indoor square in the southern Taiwan city. Hsu was a studio model and actress before she worked as a radio personality in the southern port city a few years ago. She twice ran for a seat in parliament but lost by narrow margins.

Woman scratches for first time since the early '70s

DALLAS (AP) — It took a doctor and a manicurist just 20 minutes to end Lauretta Adams' dream of setting a world record. The 43-year-old woman said she had been growing her fingernails for 24 years before she cut them Oct. 10, the longest one measured 89 centimetres and they totalled about 406 centimetres, she said. But the inconvenience she had suffered trying to get into the Guinness Book of World records recently turned to pain. "For about the last year, they'd been hurting me," Adams told Dallas-Fort Worth television station KDFW. "Besides, the world record holder is a man from India and he has me beat by 193 centimetres. I would never have been able to pass him." She said she kept her clippings, but hasn't decided what to do with them. Adams said that after having her nails cut, she did something she hasn't been able to do since the early 1970s: "I scratched."

McGregor finds Utah terrifying

NEW YORK (AP) — Clean, wholesome Salt Lake City is a long way from home for British actor Ewan McGregor, in more ways than one "yeah, well, I'm fed up with it," the star of last year's gritty "Trainspotting" told Entertainment Weekly during shooting of "A Life Less Ordinary," which is due out Friday. "There's a paranoia and narrow-mindedness here that I find terrifying," he said of Utah's biggest city. "They won't even sell you cigarettes without an ID. And when people come to your house and they see beer or wine bottles lying around, God, you get filthy looks."

Bullied husband gets restraining order over wife

HARARE (AFP) — A Zimbabwean man won a restraining order against his wife after telling a court she frequently beat him up and poured cold water over him while he was sleeping, a newspaper reported Sunday. Describing his wife as "huge in size" he said she also "pulled my private parts" and frog-marched him around in front of his friends. The man, who was not named by the newspaper, fled his home but was followed by his wife who took away the small bus with which he earned his living. The court ordered the wife to keep the peace and return her husband's bus.